

GD. 1<sup>st</sup> March 1890

**N**OTES ON THE ART TREASURES AT PENICUIK  
HOUSE MIDLOTHIAN  
BY JOHN M. GRAY F.S.A. SCOT.  
CURATOR SCOTTISH NA-  
TIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

REPRINTED, WITH LARGE ADDITIONS  
FROM "THE SCOTTISH LEADER."



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1889.

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Frank Simpson



George Schäff. Esq.

C. B.

With kind regards,

Duly

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J. M. Gray F.S.A. (Scot)

Died at Edinburgh 22<sup>nd</sup> March

1894.

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## THE ART TREASURES OF SCOTLAND.

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### III. PENICUIK HOUSE.

#### I.

THERE are few Scottish families that, during the last two hundred years, have been more closely connected with the progress of culture in their native country than the Clerks of Penicuik.

Claiming descent from the Drummonds of Hawthornden, through Elizabeth Henderson, granddaughter of the poet and first wife of the first Baronet of Penicuik, they have produced, both in the main line and in its younger branches, a goodly proportion of men of intellect and mark. At present we need only name Sir John Clerk, the second Baronet, one of the Commissioners for the Union, and a Baron of the Exchequer, a man of varied attainments and the strongest individuality, and known as an enthusiastic antiquary; his son, Sir James, who was the architect of the present mansion of the family; whose brother, Sir George Clerk Maxwell, the fourth Baronet, distinguished himself by his efforts to promote the commercial interests of his country, establishing a linen manufactory at Dumfries, engaging in mining schemes for copper and lead, and writing much upon agricultural and industrial subjects; John Clerk of Eldin, younger brother of the last-named, author of the celebrated "Essay on Naval Tactics," and known as an artist by his series of etchings which preserve in a manner so interesting to the antiquary the aspect of many of the historical edifices of Scotland; his well-known son John Clerk, "the Coryphaeus of the Scottish Bar," afterwards Lord Eldin; and the Right Hon. Sir

George Clerk, sixth Baronet, the friend of Sir Robert Peel, one of the prominent politicians of his time, and especially versed in all matters of statistics. William Aikman, the portrait-painter, too, was descended from the house of Penicuik, his mother having been the eldest sister of Sir John Clerk, the first Baronet ; and, in our own time, Professor James Clerk Maxwell, whose father was grandson of the fourth Baronet and brother of the sixth, has by his eminence in science added new lustre to his parental name.

But not only have the Clerks been themselves witty—using the word in its best, its old English, sense—they have been the cause of wit in others ; by their loyal friendships with the best Scottish painters and poets of their time, and their open-handed patronage of these men's work, they have identified themselves with the history of art and literature in Scotland. One can hardly pronounce the name of Allan Ramsay without thinking of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, or the name of Alexander Runciman, without recalling that of Sir James, his son and successor.

The mansion of the family is situated about a mile and a half from the village of Penicuik, on a commanding situation, overlooking the wooded valley of the Esk, a “classic stream” which, at this point, is still uncontaminated by the chemicals of the paper-makers, whose manufactories begin to appear a little lower, at the village itself. Manifestly great care and the finest taste have been expended by the successive owners of the place in laying out the grounds, which are a triumph of landscape-gardening, so filled are they with pleasant combinations of woodland, lawn, and flowers ; and we shall hardly forget their gorgeous aspect on that summer day when we first saw them, with their wealth of purple rhododendron blossoms, and, here and there, a touch of particularly vivid crimson of beech-leaves diversifying the “greenery” of June. Especially noticeable is the skill which has arranged that spaces of shadowed and closely enclosed foliage shall lead,

with all the force of sharp and grateful contrast, to amplest breadth of outlook and extended view ; and so aptly does the peak of the Black Hill top the belt of trees that bounds the Upper Pond, and with such a perfect sense of definitely calculated balance, of satisfying composition, does the blue outline of Mendick complete the view as we look up the stream from near the south front of the house, that, in a fanciful mood, we could well believe the whole to have been the result of something more than a mere happy chance,—could almost imagine that he who designed the place had been gifted with a wizard's power, greater than that of the Prophet himself, that the mountains had indeed been at his beck and call, that they had come at his bidding, and taken their stations, each in the precise spot best fitted to give to the prospect its last, its crowning perfection.

Nay, Nature herself, even in her moments of wildest storm, seems to have been working in harmony with the designer of the place, and making for its beauty. When you have surveyed the last-named prospect, and turned a little towards the left to follow the depressions of the ground which mark the position of the unseen bed of the Esk, you note the greensward that borders the stream ; and this leads the eye beyond to the further bank, where an open space of clearing among the trees diversifies the succession of their rounded tops, this break and point of pause being again repeated further up to the left among the trees that crest the hill. The last opening was the work of the tempest, which, by overturning a trunk or two, disclosed a glimpse of the distant Peeblesshire moor behind, giving just that final touch, that hint of the beyond “over the hills and far away,” which perfects the view, —not only to the painter, as completing the lines of its composition, but to the poet as well, by adding that sense of extended outlook, as of a vista piercing into the breadth of the world, which is needful, for finest imaginative effect, in every landscape.

Then, too, there are the Penicuik Gardens to be seen,—the old garden, lying on a sheltered slope to the south, with its glass-houses, the first, or all but the very first, of the kind in Scotland ; the extensive modern garden, bounded by brick walls, the soft mellow colouring of which tells so pleasantly through the green of the trees ; and especially the “American Garden,” with its wealth of many-coloured azaleas springing from the midmost space of softest turf, “a garden inclosed” like the garden of the Canticles, cloistered and protected, like some princess of romance, by thick-set hedges and a circle of sheltering wood, lest any eager and nipping air of our northern clime should visit its cheek too roughly, and blanch the beauty of its ardent face of flowers.

## II.

The house, which fronts us as we approach the termination of the drive, is a modern edifice, built by Sir James, the third Baronet, in 1761, after he had returned from a residence in Italy, saturated with classical ideas. It was erected entirely from the Baronet’s own designs ; but, doubtless, these were produced under the influence of Robert Adam, the celebrated architect, whose sister had been married in 1753 to John Clerk, author of the “Naval Tactics,” Sir James’s younger brother. Consequently the present house does not possess the interest of having been the meeting-place of Allan Ramsay, who died in 1758, and his friends and patrons of the Clerk family ; an association erroneously assigned to the present structure by Dr. Daniel Wilson in his “Reminiscences of Old Edinburgh,” a work which contains many curious particulars regarding the Clerks, and especially of the Baron, the second Baronet. The house in which the poet and the antiquary spent together many a genial evening of “honest talk and wholesome wine” no longer exists. It occupied a site close behind the present mansion, on whose completion

it was removed. Some of the old cellars remain under the earthen mound to the south, and are still in use. We may sigh a little over the memories and associations of old Penicuik House, over the vanished picturesqueness of its "crownstep" gables and its circular corkscrew turrets, of which a shadow still survives in the sketch by John Clerk, reproduced in the Bannatyne Club issue of his etchings; but doubtless the present mansion is vastly more commodious and in better harmony with modern ideas of comfort than was its predecessor, and it takes its place excellently in the landscape; its effect not greatly marred by the more recent wings added by Bryce in 1857-8; its straight perpendicular and horizontal lines contrasting excellently with the flowing curves of ground and trees, in that fashion which Turner recognised and loved, and emphasised so delightfully in his early drawings of four-square English mansions set amid the rounded forms of wood and hill and stream.

As we turn our eye towards the offices of Penicuik House, which are situated a little to our right, two objects of rather singular aspect arrest our attention. Regarding one of them—a tall, very ecclesiastical-looking steeple garnished with the usual large gilded clock-face, which in the oddest fashion surmounts the stables—a curious bit of tradition lingers in the neighbourhood. It seems that Sir James designed not only his own mansion, but also the parish church of Penicuik. When the plan of the latter, however, was submitted to the heritors or kirk-session, it appears that they would have none of the steeple,—for what reason is not recorded, whether it was that their architectural tastes did not chime in with those of the Baronet, or that they considered it as too decorative a feature to be in accordance with severe Presbyterian principles, or whether, finally, the expense was too great for their pockets. Declined, at any rate, the steeple was, so local tradition affirms. But Sir James was by no means willing that the structure

which his brain had devised should only be dimly visible upon paper, and never take substantial embodiment in stone and lime; so he reared it, at his own proper cost, in his stable-yard, where it still forms so imposing and unusual a feature.

The other curious erection is a rounded dome on the opposite side of the court, raising its height above the stable buildings. This is nothing less than an accurate reproduction of "Arthur's O'on," which formerly existed on the north bank of the Carron, a mile and a half from Falkirk, believed by "Sandy Gordon," the great antiquarian friend of the second Baronet of Penicuik, to be a Roman *Sacellum*, or chapel in which military standards and insignia were deposited, and fully described and discussed in his "*Itinerarium Septentrionale*," that precious folio which Oldbuck had captured and was beginning to examine when we make his acquaintance in the opening chapters of "*The Antiquary*."

Turning, however, to the house itself, we may remark, as we enter, that the ornaments of the front—the stone vases that break the sky-line, and the graceful "Chippendale" shield of arms, furnished with the decorative, not heraldic, adjunct of wings—were designed by John Clerk of Eldin, author of the "*Naval Tactics*," a cadet of the family. Also that the *grisaille* painting on the lower side of the roof of the raised portico was executed—so James Jackson's "*Account of the Parish of Penicuik*" informs us—by Alexander Runciman, when he was an apprentice with John Norie, the well-known decorative painter and landscapist of Edinburgh, and that it was the ability displayed in this work that induced Sir James to assist in sending the youth for four or five years to Rome, whence he returned to execute the mural paintings of the St. Margaret Staircase and the Ossian Hall of Penicuik House. The motto, from Cicero's *De Officiis* with which the portal is inscribed, was chosen by the Earl of Perth, grandson of John Drummond, the attainted

Earl of Melfort, a close friend of Sir James's ; and a letter regarding it may be transcribed, as a quaint example of the stately epistles of our ancestors.

“SIR,—Upon considering the manner of your House of Pennicueik, where I had the pleasure of beeing some days in November last, and admiring the Architecture of it, after 40 years pondering (*sic*) in my mind a Precept of Cicero's,

*Non Domo Dominus, sed Domino Domus  
honestanda est,*

found for the first time that it was obtemperate, and should wish for leave to inscribe it on Pennicueik House as the real sentiment of

Your most obedient

Servant and Cousin

PERTH.

“LUNDIN HOUSE, Ap. 22, 1771.”

### III.

In the Entrance Hall various antiquarian and artistic treasures decorate the walls or are preserved in glass cases,—the colours of the local volunteer regiment that was raised at the time of the French Invasion scare, full-sized marble copies of various antique statues, excellent old china, several fine missals, the fan and necklace of Mary Queen of Scots, said to have come into the Clerk family from Mary Gray, wife of the first John Clerk of Penicuik, through her mother, Mary Gillies, to whom it was given before the execution at Fotheringay, and the gold snuff-box presented by the Scottish Widows' Fund to Lord Eldin, in 1825, in recognition of his services at the time of the foundation of the company.

### IV.

Turning to the right from the Hall we enter the Dining-room, where the most important of

the portraits are hung. But here the places of honour on the walls, above the fireplaces and fronting the long line of windows which light the apartment, are occupied by no family portraits, by no effigies of distinguished heads of the house. Even the portrait of the second Baronet, the potent Baron of Exchequer himself, even the great Raeburn group of the fifth Baronet and his comely wife, Mary Dacre, have been waived to less important positions ; and the pictures which hold the chief places represent a poet and a painter who were loved and honoured by this family of Penicuik.

Over the fireplace to the right is an excellent portrait, by William Aikman, of Allan Ramsay the elder, a man who, though his verses may seem a little artificial and a little dull to the readers of our own day, is worthy of all honour, not only for having aided in turning Scottish poetry into a freer and more natural channel, but also for having established a theatre and the first circulating library in Edinburgh, and so distinctly served the cause of culture in Scotland. He was the sworn friend of the house of Penicuik, the chosen associate of the second Baronet, and of his son, afterwards Sir James, whom he addresses in that homely and vigorous "Epistle," beginning—

"Blythe may he be who o'er the haugh,  
All free from care, may sing and laugh,"

which is dated "Pennycuick, May 9, 1755."

The present picture, very similar to that which was excellently mezzotinted by George White, shows the poet nearly to the waist, clad in a brown coat, the shirt open at the throat and without a cravat. No wig is worn, but the head is wound round tightly, cap-fashion, with a low-toned orange handkerchief, beneath which appears the bright, alert, intelligent face, with its bushy eyebrows and very black eyes, its wide-nostirred, humorous, slightly *retroussé* nose, and its large-lipped mouth, full and rippling over

with good-nature and sensitiveness. We are enabled to fix the exact date of the picture by means of the following interesting inscription on the back, in the autograph of Sir John, the second Baronet :—

“A Roundlet in Mr. Ramsay’s own Way.

Here painted on this canvass clout,  
By Aikman’s hand is Ramsay’s snout,  
The picture’s value none might doubt,  
For ten to one I’ll venture,  
The greatest criticks could not tell  
Which of the two does most excell,  
Or in his way should bear the bell,  
The Poet or the Painter.

J. C. Pennicuik, 5 May 1723.”

1723

The picture accordingly represents the poet in his thirty-seventh year, and was painted when the artist was about to leave Scotland to settle in London, an occasion on which Ramsay inscribed to him his “Pastoral Farewell,”—not his only poetical tribute to his friend, for previously, in 1721, he had penned another “Epistle,” in which he thanks the portraitist because

“By your assistance unconstrain’d,  
To courts I can repair,  
And by your art my way I’ve gained  
To closets of the fair.”

There are many other portraits which enable us to gather what was the personal appearance of the author of “The Gentle Shepherd.” There is the print in which the poet appears in all the bright bravery of youth, clad in a kind of fanciful Scottish costume,—a coat slashed at the sleeves, a plaid laid over his right shoulder, a broad Highland bonnet, with a St. Andrew badge, set on the head. This is the frontispiece to the first quarto edition of his works, published by Ruddiman in 1721: it is engraved by T. Vereruyse, and bears the initials J. S. P., which, as we learn from the engraving by Vertue, evidently from the same picture, in Ramsay’s “Poems and Songs,” 1728, stands for “John

*Smilow*

Smibert, Pinxit." This painter, born in Edinburgh in 1684, was a friend and correspondent of Ramsay's, and it was to him, while studying art in Italy, that the poet addressed that "Epistle to a Friend in Florence" which is included in his works. He accompanied Bishop Berkeley to Rhode Island in 1727, and afterwards settled in Boston, where he resided till his death in 1751. In Britain his works are scarce, but a portrait of Berkeley by his hand is in the National Portrait Gallery, London, and there is at Monymusk, Aberdeenshire, along with minor examples of his art, an important group of Lord Cullen and his family, including twelve life-sized figures, which he painted in 1720. Smibert is believed to have executed a second portrait of Allan Ramsay, that kit-cat likeness with the head turned nearly in profile to the left, which formed the frontispiece to "The Gentle Shepherd, with Illustrations of the Scenery," Edinburgh 1814, engraved by A. Wilson, from a drawing made by A. Carse from the picture (now at New Hall, Mid-Lothian), which had belonged to the poet himself, and afterwards to Janet Ramsay, a daughter who survived him.

Again there is a singularly heavy-looking and spiritless portrait engraved in the second volume of Ruddiman's 1728 edition of Ramsay's works, marked as by Strange's master, "R. Cooper, ad vivum sculpsit, Edin<sup>r</sup>," showing the figure to the waist, the right hand holding a volume of the Poems ; and the smaller print, without name of painter or engraver, which seems to be an improved adaptation of this portrait, the face become refined and delicate, a fitting face for a poet.

There is, further, that interesting and characteristic chalk drawing, by the poet's artist son, preserved at Woodhouselee, and inscribed "His first attempt of that kind from the life . . . 1729," done when the youth—who in the words of his father in a letter to the above-mentioned Smibert, had "been pursuing his science since he was a

dozen years auld"—was just sixteen, seven years before he started for Italy, to study art in Rome ; and there is a print in which the same portrait is treated as a bust on a pedestal, drawn by the younger Ramsay and engraved by Cooper. There is also the well-known portrait, done by the same filial hand, that was engraved by David Allan in the 1788 quarto edition of "The Gentle Shepherd," a bust likeness, with the strong-featured, firmly modelled face turned in profile to the right, appearing from behind a parapet on which lie the various symbols of the pastoral muse, a mask, a staff, a crook, and a rustic pipe. In interest, however, and in all life-like qualities, the picture at Penicuik is fully equal to the best of those we have named as portraying the shrewd and cheerful countenance of the homely poet.

The portrait which hangs to the left, over the other fireplace of the Penicuik Dining-room is also by Aikman, and its subject is the painter himself. Here again an additional interest is given to the picture, in this case a most pathetic interest, by its inscription. On its back is a note, also in the hand of the second Baronet of Penicuik, the painter's cousin :—" Mr. Aikman, painted by himself when dying, and left as a legacy to me, J. C., anno 1733."

This artist was born in 1682, the son of William Aikman of Cairnie, Forfarshire, by his second wife, Margaret, sister of the first Sir John Clerk. In his youth he was possessed, as Douglas of the Baronage says, with even more than his customary solemnity, of a "mighty genius for portrait-painting." His father, like so many of the Scottish gentry, was a member of the Scottish Bar, and desired that his son should enter upon the studies that would qualify him for the same profession—studies which would reasonably occupy his time, put him in the way of intellectual effort, and give him enough law to enable him to manage his estates profitably, and to sit with dignity and propriety upon the bench of county magistrates. But the parental wishes were in vain ; the "mighty

genius for portrait-painting" was not to be controlled. Aikman studied art for three years in Edinburgh, under Sir John de Medina, of whose portraiture there is a representative series in Penicuik House ; and, when he came into possession of his ancestral acres, which were valuable then, and have become doubly valuable since, he promptly parted with them, sold all that he had for the sake of art ; and having rid himself of the burden of ponderable and engrossing material things, started a free man to study painting in Rome. During the five years that he spent abroad he even visited Constantinople and Smyrna, a "far cry" indeed for a Scottish laird of the beginning of the seventeenth century. Returning to his native country in 1712, he was in time patronised by John, Duke of Argyll, and in 1723 he established himself in London, where he moved in the best and most cultured circles, numbering among his friends Sir Robert Walpole, Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, and Gay, several of whom still live upon his canvases. At the age of forty-nine he was prosperous and happy, in excellent practice as a portrait-painter, busied upon a great group of the Royal Family, commissioned by the Earl of Burlington, and now in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. But this work was destined never to be completed. His only son, one of those "bonnie bairns" to whom Allan Ramsay refers in his "Pastoral Farewell to Mr. Aikman," a youth of great artistic promise—several etched studies after Van Dyck by his hand still exist to prove his talent<sup>1</sup>—sickened and died at the age of eighteen, and the father never recovered the blow. He pined away, died six months afterwards, 1731, and was buried in the same grave in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh. Mallet wrote his epi-

<sup>1</sup> A three-quarters length portrait of the younger Aikman, with a grave earnest face, clad in a long-skirted grey coat, and holding a sketch in his hand, is in the possession of the representative of the family at The Ross, Hamilton. It is an excellent example of the elder Aikman's portraiture.

taph ; Ramsay, Thomson, and Somerville have recorded his virtues and the charm of his presence.

At Penicuik we are enabled to trace the development of Aikman's art from first to final phase. His portrait of "Dame Christina Kilpatrick," second wife of the first Baronet, is marked on the back by the painter's cousin, "painted 1706 by Mr. Aikman when he was learning to paint, but very like." The portrait of the second Baronet himself, similarly inscribed, "painted by Mr. Aikman, about the year 1706, when he was beginning to paint," is identical in style with the work of his master Medina. In the Red Bedroom are hung his school copies after classical subjects by Maratti, done at Rome ; and we have seen that the portrait of himself was one of the very last canvases that his brush touched.

This portrait of Aikman showing the figure nearly to the waist within a painted oval, is practically identical with that in the National Gallery of Scotland, formerly in the possession of Mrs. Forbes, the artist's eldest daughter, and engraved in "The Bee," vol. xviii. 1793. The only difference is that here the draperies consist of a coat and vest of a cool yellowish-brown velvet, passing into definite yellow in the high lights, while in the National Gallery version a golden-brown gown and a flowered vest of the same colour is substituted. The well-balanced, handsome, oval face, with its ripe mouth, rippling in its lines and dimpled at the corners, fine dark-blue eyes, and rounded, slightly cleft chin, is turned in three-quarters towards the right, and surmounted by a voluminous powdered wig. Another portrait of Aikman by himself is preserved at Florence in the Painters' Gallery of the Uffizi. Here the pose of the figure is similar to that in the two other pictures ; but the coat is of crimson, the lower part of the body is wrapped in a dark mantle, and no wig is worn, its place being taken by a white handkerchief which is wound round the head. Among the portraits of Aikman at The Ross is another from his own hand, showing him as he

appeared on his travels, bearded, and wearing a turban and a ruddy Eastern gown.

We may now turn to the family portraits with which the walls of the Dining-room are covered. The earliest of them is a portrait of John Clerk, father of the first Baronet, and the founder of the family, known for centuries in the familiar traditions of the Penicuik nursery under the playful title of "Musso," from his prolonged residence in France. He was born in 1610, the son of a merchant-burgess of Montrose, and baptized at Fettercairn by the Bishop of Caithness, on the 22d December of that year. Bred a merchant, he settled in Paris in 1634, where he acquired "a fortune of at least £10,000," as his grandson informs us. In 1647 he returned to Scotland, married, acquired the lands of Penicuik and of Wrightshouses, near Edinburgh, and died in 1674, at the age of sixty-three.

His portrait, which hangs in the Dining-room, is not a contemporary work, but a copy executed by Aikman—to range with the other family pictures—from a miniature, done in Paris by an unknown painter, and still preserved in the Charter-room. This original, inscribed on its gold case "John Clerk of Pennicuik, 1644," is a bust portrait painted in oils on a small oval slab of bloodstone, the polished green surface of which, with its red markings, serves for background. The face shows a delicate, prominently aquiline nose, a forehead broad rather than high, sharply pencilled black eyebrows above the dark blue eyes, a full, brightly red lower lip, a small moustache of darkest brown, turned up at the ends, and a tiny tuft on the chin. The bust is clad in that pseudo-Roman costume so much affected in the portraiture of the period, similar to that in which Charles II. appears in the equestrian statue in the Parliament Square, Edinburgh, and very closely resembling the dress worn by George Lauder, author of "The Scottish Souldier," in the scarce portrait engraved by J. Hermanni after J. Reyners. The tunic is of a bright blue colour,

X

cut square at the neck, and edged with gold lace, decorated on the breast and shoulders with gold ornaments worked into the shape of satyr and lion heads, and a bright red mantle falls in graceful folds on either side. The little picture is of excellent workmanship and is delicately finished, much of its precision of detail having been lost in Aikman's not very refined life-sized copy.

Above the fireplace in the Drawing-room is another portrait of this same John Clerk, a large, dark, gallery full-length, stated to have been executed, like the miniature, in Paris. Here the founder of the family is depicted standing, in a black dress, his right hand resting on the stone ball which surmounts and decorates the parapet of garden walk, his left hand sustaining his sword. The countenance is manifestly the same as that in the miniature. This picture is stated by family tradition to have been painted by "De Wit," a portrait-painter we have not as yet been able to identify. It bears no resemblance in style to the portraits executed by James de Witt at Holyrood in 1684-5, and at Glamis Castle in 1686-8; and it could hardly have been the same artist who was working at Paris before the year 1647. Nor, of course, is it by Jacob de Wit, the painter of a subject in the Library to be afterwards described, who was not born till 1695.

The portrait of the wife of John Clerk, Mary, daughter of Sir William Gray of Pittendrum, is also a copy, and of this a delicate and spirited contemporary miniature is preserved at Penicuik. It was executed about the end of the last century by Miss Ann Forbes, a grand-daughter of William Aikman's, and consequently a connection of the Clerks, whose work, chiefly in crayons, though this is an oil picture, is to be found in many Scottish houses, as, for instance, at The Ross, Hamilton, the seat of the present head of Aikman's family. A few other examples of her brush are preserved in the present collection; and her own portrait, painted by David Allan, a carefully handled cabinet picture, very clear and

*Mrs.  
Forbes,  
crayons.*

silvery in tone, showing her standing in three-quarters length, holding a porterayon and a portfolio, is in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. The portrait of Mrs. Mary Clerk, like that of her husband, shows the figure to the waist ; the face is in three-quarters to the right. She has light hazel eyes, neutral brown eyebrows and hair, the latter elaborately curled, fastened with bows of black ribbon, and decorated in front with a small plume of white ostrich feathers, and she wears pearl ear-rings and a double string of large pearls round the neck. The costume is a black flowered dress, worn low at the breast, with a tall white lace collar standing up behind the neck.

## V.

We come now to examine the portraits of Sir John Clerk, the first Baronet of Penicuik, who was born in 1649 ; served repeatedly in Parliament, after the Revolution of 1688, as member for the county of Edinburgh ; was Lieutenant-Colonel of a regiment commanded by the Earl of Lauderdale ; was created a Baronet by Charles II. in 1679 ; acquired the lands of Lasswade in 1700 ; and died in 1722. He is described by his son as "one of the strongest men of his time, but not full in stature, being scarce 5 feet 6 inches," "finely made, had proportionate breadth, and a Hercules shoulders," "a man of knowledge and application," "a pretty good scholar, and exceedingly knowing in Divinity."

No fewer than five portraits—pictures and miniatures—at Penicuik are stated to represent this first Baronet. The earliest is that preserved in the glass case beside the entrance to the Library. It is a miniature, executed on paper with the brush and Indian ink, showing a small head, turned in three-quarters to the left, and garnished with a long wig. On the back is inscribed, in the handwriting of the Chief Baron, the first Baronet's son, "Sir John Clerk then in those days in London a counsellor at Law great

1689

wigs were in fashion 1689." In the same case is a second miniature of similar general character, but drawn upon vellum, accompanied by a companion miniature of the first Baronet's second wife, Christian, daughter of the Rev. Mr. Kilpatrick. Another portrait of this lady, an oil-portrait, showing the figure to the waist, is in the Dining-room. Here she wears a claret-coloured dress and an amber-brown mantle. The hair is yellowish brown, the eyes of a dark rich brown, and the face, which is a little out of drawing, though curiously individual and life-like, has peculiarly raised eyebrows. This work is inscribed in the handwriting of her son-in-law—"Dame Christian Kilpatrick, my father's second wife, painted 1706 by Mr. Aikman, when he was learning to paint, but very like"—an early example of the artist, done when he was studying under Medina, the year before he left for Italy.

In the Dining-room are three other works, all life-sized oil-portraits, stated to be likenesses of the first Baronet. One of them, showing Sir John clad in a brown gown lined with red, is manifestly a companion portrait done at the same time as the last-named portrait of his wife. It also bears a similar note by the Baron—"My father Sir John Clerk, painted by Mr. Aikman about the year 1706, when he was beginning to paint." In its style of handling, as well as in its combinations of colour, it recalls most strongly the works of Sir John Medina, its painter's master.

aikman  
1706

X

A second portrait is also by Aikman, a later and more accomplished work. Here the figure is seen nearly to the waist, turned to the right, with the face slightly in the same direction. A curled wig is worn, and a single-breasted coat of pale blue velvet. The eyes are of a clear blue colour; and the face is of that firm, powerful, large-featured type which for generations was habitual in the house of Penicuik. This picture, again, is inscribed in the son's handwriting—"Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, my Father, painted by Mr.

Aikman. He was born in April 1649, and died in March 1722, aged 73."

Very considerable difficulty attaches to the remaining portrait, which is believed to represent the first Sir John Clerk, and to the manifestly companion portrait beside it, which has been held to portray his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Henderson of Elvington, and granddaughter of William Drummond of Hawthornden, a poet "of an excellent Fancy for the times he lived in," as the Baron remarks, rather patronisingly, in the family history with which he begins his account of his own life.

*error -*

It has been stated (Catalogue of National Gallery of Scotland, 1887) that these portraits "are dated 1674." This, however, is inaccurate, as no inscription appears upon either work. It has also been asserted (Catalogue of Royal Scottish Academy Loan Exhibition of 1863) that "the original Scougal accounts for the price paid for them" are preserved at Penicuik; but a search which we have made through the old receipts of the period has failed to disclose such a document. Probably this second reference is not to the painter's receipt, but simply to an entry of the payment which is to be found in an interesting old account-book preserved in the Charter-room at Penicuik, one of that "great many journals and writings" which the Chief Baron records that his father left "under his hand, which will, I hope, bear testimony to the regard he always had for virtue and Honesty." This volume the Chief Baron—partly in filial piety, more perhaps with the instinct of the accurate and omnivorous antiquary—has docketed as follows: "Book of Accompts by my Grandfather Mr. Jo. Clerk, and Father Sir John Clerk, Whereon are several things remarkable. 1°, their methodes of accompting. 2°, their methodes of management. 3°, the different prices of things. John Clerk, 1733." Here on a page headed *June 1674*, but under date of "Novr 1675," the following entry appears—"To John Scougall for 2 pictures £36"; and it

*Scougall*

is curious, as illustrating "the different prices of things," and also as showing how a love of all the various fine arts prevailed then among the Clerks, as it has prevailed among them ever since, to note another entry, which appears a few lines beneath : "To Mr. Chambers for Teaching G. and me to play y<sup>e</sup> violl £150," both sums being in Scots currency.

There can be no doubt that the portraits above referred to are the "2 pictures" by Scougall mentioned in the account-book, for a comparison with other works by that painter proves them to be excellent and most typical examples of his brush, and there are no other pictures in the house painted in a style recalling that artist, except the portrait of Lord Justice-Clerk Sir Archibald Primrose, which will be afterwards referred to. It has been assumed, but on less sufficient evidence, that they represent the first Sir John Clerk (by whom they were certainly commissioned) and his first wife, and that they were painted to celebrate the wedding of the pair, which occurred in 1674. It is to be noted, however, that the account-book gives no information as to who the personages are that appear in the pictures ; that there is no contemporary inscriptions on the works themselves to prove that it is the first Baronet and his wife that are portrayed and not merely two of their friends ; that in the male portrait the face is delicate in its curves and contours, with a long thin nose, drooping at the point, quite unlike the countenance which appears in the pictures certified in the handwriting of the son as representing the first Baronet ; and that the present picture seems to portray a man of more than twenty-five or twenty-six, the age of the first Sir John when the work was executed.

But, whomever they portray, the pictures are excellent and interesting examples of a little-known Scottish artist, by far the finest works by John Scougall with which we are acquainted ; and they afford most interesting representations

*Scougall*

of the costume of the end of the seventeenth century.

Each of them shows its subject to the waist. The male figure is turned to the right, clad in a black doublet, with richly wrought silver buttons, partly open in front and disclosing the shirt, which also appears at the arms, beneath the short sleeves of the coat; and the short embroidered cravat is drawn through a loop and spread out, in fan-like folds, on either side. The thin, nervous-looking face wears a very peculiar expression; the eyes dark blue, the long yellowish hair curling down to the shoulders: it is a face eminently individual, utterly forgetable.

The lady's portrait is even a more beautiful and fascinating old picture. Here the figure is turned to the left; the face, seen in three-quarters, is rather pallid in its flesh-tints, as was usual with the painter, a characteristic which appears also in the male portrait. The eyes are of a neutral grey-blue; the yellow-brown hair is worn flat on the top, and bound with a string of pearls, from beneath which it flows in carefully arranged ringlets. The dress, of plain white satin, with voluminous sleeves, is cleverly handled and excellently expressive of the texture and sheen of the material; and a brooch of pearls and dark stones is set at the breast, clasping a scarf of faint blending blue and yellow tints, which floats over the lady's right shoulder, and flows freely behind.

Of James Clerk of Wrightshouses, the second son of the first John Clerk of Penicuik, and brother of the first Baronet, we have an imposing three-quarters length painted by Sir Peter Lely. He appears standing, robed in a rich crimson gown, which shows its orange-tinted lining, with an elaborate lace cravat, and ruffles appearing at the hands, one of which is laid gracefully against his side, while his right arm rests on a stone parapet to the left. The face is of a man of between thirty and forty, with handsome regular features and the rounded, oval cheeks and small,

ripe, red-lipped mouth which the painter loved to depict, and with much individuality and character in the firm clear-cut line of the nose. A dark curtain appears behind the figure, and a low-toned, wintry-looking distance of landscape.

The companion picture of Mary Ricard, “a French lady,” wife of James Clerk of Wrightshouses, also shows the figure standing and in three-quarters length. She is clad in a low-breasted, short-sleeved dress, richly brocaded with crimson, yellow, and green flowers, and with a simple string of large pearls round the neck. She has brown eyes, light brown eyebrows, moderately arched, and dark brown curling hair, one curl lying isolated on her white shoulder. She is arranging flowers in a yellow brown pot decorated with Cupids’ heads, which stands on a table to the left, and behind the figure is a wall with a pilaster, a red curtain, and a glimpse of landscape with blue mountain peaks, which may very well be the southern slope of the familiar Pentlands as seen from Penicuik House.

## VI.

Of the first Baronet’s eldest son, Sir John Clerk, second Baronet, and one of the Barons of Exchequer, several portraits are preserved at Penicuik; but even a more complete picture of this stout old gentleman, perhaps the most potent and memorable figure that appears in this family history, may be gathered from the voluminous diaries in his hand that are preserved in the Charter-room, and from that “History of my Life,” which he himself compiled from these, and which the present Baronet has placed at the disposal of the Scottish History Society for publication; a manuscript affording a clear narrative of the events of the Baron’s life, and throwing curious and valuable side-lights upon the manners and public occurrences of the time, while, in almost every line of its pages, it gives a vivid, if unconscious,

picture of the quaint, masterful personality of its writer.

He was born, as he tells us, on the 8th of February 1676—not in 1684, as stated by his biographers; studied at Penicuik School and Glasgow University; and, at the age of nineteen, went to Leyden to be instructed in law by “a very learned man, Philippus Bernardus Vitrianus.” Here he boarded with a German who taught mathematics, philosophy, and music, and he applied himself to all of these studies as well as to law, having previously, as he remarks with proper pride, “played tolerably on the harpsicord, and since I was 7 I touched the violin a little.” Nor do these exhaust the list of his pursuits, for “among other things I learned to draw from Francis Miers, a very great painter; this proceeded partly from inclination, and partly from the advice I had from some of my Dutch friends, for all their young Folks learn to draw from their being 7 years of Age, and find it vastly useful in most Stations of Life.” His great friend at Leyden was Herman Boerhaave, then a man of twenty-six, afterwards world-famous as a physician, and he gives a curious account of his being treated by the young doctor with a “chymical medicine he had discovered which would carry off the smallpox before they came any length,” and which was successful at the time, though the malady returned in full force three months afterwards, when Clerk had gone to Rome. “We not only lived like brothers while I studied in Leyden, but continued a correspondence together while he lived”; and forty-four years afterwards Boerhaave bequeathed to the Baron a collection of his books, which still forms part of the Library at Penicuik House.

After leaving Leyden Clerk visited Germany, Italy, France, and Flanders, and the two large ms. volumes of his “Travels” during this period—not only descriptive of the various places that he saw, and very particularly of the antiquities of Rome, but also giving an account of the laws

manners, and customs of the several countries that he visited—prove how diligent and observant the youth had been during the whole time. At the end of these volumes he sums up the results of his residence abroad, as follows :—

“ *N.B.*—My improvements abroad were these :

“ I had studied the civil Law for three Winters at Leyden, and did not neglect it at home, by which means I passed Advocate, by a privat and publick examination some months after my return, with great ease and some credite.

“ I spoke French and Italian very well, but particularly Dutch, having come very young into Holland, and kept more in the Company of Hollanders than those of my own country.

“ I had applied much to classical learning, and had more than ordinary inclination for Greek and Roman Antiquities.

“ I understood pictures better than became my Purse, and as to Musick I . . . performed better, especially on the Herpsicord, than became a gentleman.

“ This, to the best of my knowledge, is a faithful account of myself.”

The volumes are illustrated with over fifty drawings of the landscapes, buildings, statues, etc., which he had seen during his travels, “ a few of many hundreds executed while I was abroad.”

In 1702 he was elected member for Whithorn in Galloway, which he represented till 1707 ; and his “ History ” contains curious particulars of the last sittings of the Scottish Parliament, and personal references to the prominent political figures of the period,—to the Duke of Queensberry, the Duke of Argyll, the Marquis of Tweeddale, the Earl of Stair, Robert Dundas, second Lord Arniston, and Fletcher of Salton—“ a man of republican principles,” “ a little untoward in temper, and much inclined to Eloquence.” In 1706-7, through the influence of the Duke of Queensberry, his first wife’s cousin, and the Duke of Argyll, he was appointed a Commissioner for the Union ; and in the following year he became

one of the Barons of the newly constituted Court of Exchequer in Scotland.

From this period till his death on the 4th of October 1755, his life was occupied with his official duties ; with planting and improving his various estates ; with the classical studies to which he continued faithful all his days ; with the composition of various learned pamphlets, several of which have been published—his “Historical View of the Forms and Powers of the Court of Exchequer in Scotland,” written in conjunction with Baron Scrope, having been edited by Sir Henry Jardine in 1820 ; in the enjoyment of the society of his friend Allan Ramsay, the poet ; and in correspondence with Roger Gale, and with Alexander Gordon, in the subscription list of whose “Itinerarium Septentrionale” he is entered for “five books,” in company with such well-known names as “Mr. Adams, Architect”; “The Right Hon. Duncan Forbes, Lord Advocate of Scotland”; “James Gibbs, Esq., Architect”; “The Right Hon. The Lord Lovat”; “Richard Mead, M.D.”; “The Hon. Sir Hans Sloane, Bart.”; and “Mr. John Smibert,” the portrait-painter. Gordon styles him “not only a treasure of learning and good taste, but now one of its chief supports in that country,” and pronounces that “among all the collections of Roman antiquities in Scotland, that of Baron Clerk claims the preference, both as to number and curiosity.” It was one of the Baron’s antiquarian experiences at a supposed Roman camp on his property of Dumcrieff, in Dumfriesshire, which, narrated to Scott by his son, John Clerk of Eldin, suggested the episode of the “Prætorium” in “The Antiquary.”

Occasionally across the quiet and characteristic pages that narrate his daily doings there falls the shadow of larger national events : of the Rebellion of 1715,—“The Earl of Mar was not only my acquaintance but my particular friend”; of the South Sea Scheme, in connection with which Clerk held stock, and was a consequent

sufferer ; and of the Rebellion of 1745, when the Highlanders in occupation of Edinburgh visited Penicuik House, demanding food and drink.

As a poet—or, at least, a rhymester—the Baron is known by the really vigorous verses which he added to the single surviving stanza of the old Scotch song

“ O merry may the maid be  
That marries the miller,”

which will be found in Johnston’s “ Musical Museum,” but were first published anonymously, in 1751, in “The Charmer”; and by the lines beginning

“ Harmonious pipe, how I envye thy bliss  
When pressed to Sylphia’s lips with gentle kiss,”

which he sent, screwed up in a flute to Susanna Kennedy, afterwards the celebrated Countess of Eglintoune, to whom Allan Ramsay dedicated his “ Gentle Shepherd,” and of whom Clerk was a lover in his youth, at the time when, as he tells us, he suffered from his father’s “ attempts ” to find him a wife, and especially to wed him to a lady—whose name he honourably suppresses—“ not to my taste, and indeed it was happy for me to have stopt short in this amour, for she proved the most disagreeable woman I ever knew, tho’ otherways a wise enough country woman.” There also exist in ms. “ Some Poetical Ejeculations on the Death of my dear wife, Lady Margaret Stuart,” that “ choice of my own,” who became his first wife, “ a very handsome woman, for the most part bred up in Galloway, a stranger to the follies of Edinburgh,” “ the best Woman that ever breathed Life.”

The earliest of the portraits of the Baron preserved at Penicuik House hangs in the dressing-room of the present Baronet. It is a small, carefully finished pencil-drawing ; an interesting memorial of Sir John’s student days at Leyden. The figure is portrayed to the waist, clad in a loose gown, and with a voluminous cravat wrapped round the neck. The hands are not shown. The hair is long and

curling. The face full, beardless, and youthful, set in three-quarters to the right, is modelled with excellent thoroughness, and very crisp and incisive in the touches that express the lips and the dimple at the corner of the mouth. The background is dark to the left, and to the right appears a wall decorated with pilasters. The drawing is inscribed on the background "Ætatis 19," and beneath "My picture done at Leyden, Jo. Clerk"; while on the back is written "My picture done at Leyden by Francis Miris," the two latter inscriptions being in the handwriting of the Baron himself.

A comparison of the dates leads to some dubiety as to who was the actual draughtsman of this portrait. There were three well-known Dutch painters of the name of Mieris—Frans Van Mieris, the pupil of Gerard Dow, born at Delft in 1635, died at Leyden 1681; Willem Van Mieris, his son, born at Leyden 1662, and died there, 1747; and his son, Frans Van Mieris, the younger, born at Leyden 1689, died there in 1763. The year in which the drawing was executed must have been 1695, consequently it cannot be the work of the elder Frans; nor can it have been done by his grandson, the younger Frans, who was then only six years of age. A solution of the difficulty seems to be afforded by a comparison of the "Travels" and the "History" of the Baron. In the former, a journal written at the time, he states that he was instructed in art at Leyden, by "Miris," but in the latter, compiled from the former many years afterwards, he states that "Francis Miers, a very great painter," was his teacher, the Christian name being apparently added from memory, which, in the present case, seems to have played him false. There can be little doubt that the portrait was drawn by Willem Van Mieris, who at the time of Clerk's residence at Leyden was forty-one years of age, and in full practice as an artist. As corroborating this supposition, we may notice that in the account of the Clerks of Penicuik

contributed by Miss Isabella Clerk to the “Life of Professor James Clerk Maxwell,” and “chiefly derived from a book of autograph letters which was long kept at Glenlair, and is now in the possession of Mrs. Maxwell,” it is stated that the Baron was a pupil of *William Mieris* in drawing; and further, that a drawing of two men’s heads similar in style to the present portrait, preserved in the Penicuik Drawing-room, is inscribed in the Baron’s hand, “Originall by William Van Miris, 1696,” indicating that about the date he must have been in communication with this artist.

Three oil portraits, showing the Baron in later life, hang in the Dining-room. In the first, by Sir John Medina, he appears still as a young man, seen to the waist, clad in a bright blue coat and a crimson cloak—a combination of primary colours in which the painter frequently indulged. His right hand is laid on a book, which rests on an unseen table in front to the right. He wears a long yellowish wig, with powdered curls, and the blue eyes and the alert mouth are full of activity and energy. Probably this portrait was executed at the time of his marriage, in 1700, for there is a companion picture of his first wife, Margaret Stewart, daughter of the third Earl of Galloway, and grand-daughter of James, Earl of Queensberry, painted by Aikman. As was to be expected in so early a work of the artist’s—he must have been under twenty when he painted it, for the lady died in 1701—this latter is full of faults, stiff in pose, with little suggestion of the figure under the draperies of white and blue: still it conveys the idea of a charming and attractive personality, fitting as that of the lady for whom the Baron—as shown in the “History of his Life,”—mourned so truly.

There is a second bust-portrait of the Baron by Sir John Medina, a low-toned picture, executed with care if with considerable hardness. Here the costume is a lilac gown, with a long curled wig, and a white cravat; the body seen turned to the right, and the face in three-quarters to the left.

The finest, however, of the portraits of the second Baronet, is the three-quarters length by his cousin, William Aikman. Here he appears robed in his black gown as Baron of the Exchequer, worn over a yellow-brown coat. Long white hanging bands appear at the breast, and lace ruffles at the wrists ; and the grave face, with its strongly marked features, is surmounted by a long curled wig. His left hand hangs down in front fingering among the folds of his gown, and the right rests upon a red-covered table. The whole is relieved against a plain brown background, with a low-toned space of crimson curtain to the left. It is an excellent example by the painter, well arranged, dignified, firmly handled, and manifestly faithful to the personality portrayed. A bust-portrait similar in costume and wig to this one, but with some difference in the features, was engraved, in line, by D. Lizars, “from a portrait in the possession of John Clerk of Eldin, Esq.”

Of Sir James, the third Baronet, the architect of the present house of Penicuik, we, unfortunately find no adequate portrait. The only effigy of him that is here preserved is a small silhouette in white paper, relieved against a black background, marked as cut two years after his death by Barbara Clerk, his fifth sister, and as being considered very like by those who knew him. It shows a small face, looking a little downwards, with a high forehead, beneath the wig, impending over the delicate features. (*See Note at page 69.*)

In the Dining-room there hangs another picture by Aikman, marked in the Baron's writing, “My eldest son, John Clerk, by Lady Margaret Stuart, born 1701, died 1722, painted by Mr. Aikman.” The figure is seen nearly to the waist ; the costume, a long curled grey wig, and a lilac-grey gown, lined with blue. The small eyes are of a blue colour ; the face pale, refined, and delicate-looking. This was “the most accomplish'd Son,” of “bright aspiring mind,” whose birth cost the life of the Baron's first wife, and whose own

death, some twenty-one years later, was mourned by Ramsay in the verses addressed to the bereaved father, which may be read in his works. On another wall hang three pictures, portraying, in pairs, the Baron's six daughters by his second wife.

Near the portrait of his son is a half-length by Aikman, rather hard in execution, showing a gentleman, with face turned to the left, in a purple-grey coat, the end of his white cravat being thrust through one of its button-holes. This is Dr. John Clerk, grandson of the first Baronet of Penicuik, whose father, Robert Clerk, was a physician in Edinburgh, and a close friend of Dr. Pitcairn. The son, born 1689, died 1757, was a personage of greater mark. For above thirty years he was the most eminent physician in Scotland ; on the institution of the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh in 1739, he was elected a Vice-President, an office which he held till his death ; and from 1740 to 1744, he was President of the Royal College of Physicians, in whose Hall in Edinburgh another smaller portrait of him is preserved. He purchased the lands of Listonshiel and Spittal in Mid-Lothian, and founded the family of the Clerks of Listonshiel. His name appears in the list of subscribers to the collection of Ramsay's poems, published in 1721, and he is believed to have contributed songs to the "Tea-table Miscellany." The portrait of his second son, Colonel Robert Clerk, in a red military uniform, is also preserved in the Penicuik Dining-room.

Two other works by Aikman may here be mentioned, two drawings in red chalk upon blue paper, which hang in a passage near the Library door. They evince more of an ideal aim than any other of the productions of this painter with which we are acquainted. Evidently they are companion works, and the female portrait is dated 1730, the year before the artist's death. This shows a girl's head in profile to the left, a young attractive little face, with the faintest half-smile playing round the tiny mouth, and the

short hair decorated with a chaplet of leaves, or of leaf-like ribbons. It is a portrait of Jean Clerk, the Baron's third daughter, who married James Smollet of Bonhill, one of the Commissioners of Edinburgh.

The other drawing shows a male face in three-quarters to the right, with flowing hair over the shoulders, and a heroic expression on the high-arched brows, the raised eyes, and the rippling lips ; the dress thrown carelessly open at the throat. This is Patrick Clerk, the Baron's third son. His life-record is a brief one, as given in the Baronage along with that of three of his brothers : "Patrick, Henry, Matthew, and Adam, died abroad, in the service of their country." We learn from the Baron's ms. that he died at Carthagena in 1744.

## VII.

We now come to consider the prime artistic treasure in Penicuik House, the largest and finest of the three Raeburns that hang in the dining-room, that admirable group of Sir John Clerk, the fifth Baronet, and his wife Rosemary (so she signed her name) Dacre. It is an oblong picture, showing the two life-sized figures almost to the knees, and turned towards our right. Nearly one-half of the picture, that to the left, is occupied with a landscape of undulating country, diversified by darker passages afforded by tree-masses, with flashes of light playing over the grass in points where it is quickened by the radiance of the setting sun, and with still sharper flashings which mark the course of the "classic Esk." To our extreme right an elm-tree raises its great forked stem, and throws out a slenderer branch, bearing embrowned leafage. This is carried over the upper edge of the picture, across nearly its whole extent, repeating, by its mass of dark against the sky, the arm of the male figure standing beneath, which is extended, dark against the distant expanse of dimly-lighted landscape

background. The sky, against which the heads of the figures are set, is filled with the soft mellow light of a sunset after rain, struggling with films of fluctuating misty clouds,—a sky in the treatment of which Raeburn has used a portrait-painter's licence, making it lower in tone than would have been the case in such a natural effect. The figure furthest to our right is that of the lady, clad in white muslin, a dress utterly without ornament, but "adorned the most" in the absolute simplicity of its soft overlapping folds, delicate and full of subtlest gradation as a pile of faintly yellow rose-leaves. The waist is girt with a ribbon of a more definite yellow, though this too is subdued, taking grey tones in shadow. The light comes from behind the figures, and the edges of the dress, catching its brightness, are the highest tones of the picture. The lady's face is one of mature comeliness and dignity, the hair brown and slightly powdered, the light touching and outlining sharply the rounded contours of cheek and chin, and the edge of the throat, which rises from the masses of pure soft muslin—itself still purer and more delicate in tone and texture. Her left hand hangs down by her side, fingering a little among the folds of the dress and compressing its filmy fabric; and her right hand rests on her companion's left shoulder, its hand, an admirable piece of draughtsmanship and foreshortening, hanging over, loose from the wrist, which is circled by a sharply struck band of black ribbon. The Baronet stands by her side, with his left arm—on whose shoulder the lady's hand rests—circling her waist, and his right relieved against the background as it stretches across the canvas, pointing, over the river, to the mansion of Penicuik,—which is manifestly visible to the pair in the distance, though unseen to the spectator of the picture. He wears a soft felt hat, broad-brimmed, low-crowned, and Quaker-like in fashion, with an oval metal clasp set in front in its band. His coat is low-toned greyish yellow in its lights, and low-toned olive

green in shadow, the vest and breeches showing a lighter tone of the same ; and a white cravat and ruffles appear at throat and wrists. His face is a well-conditioned face of middle life, small-mouthed, with cheeks plumply rounded, and a nose delicately aquiline. He stands, quietly expectant, looking into the lady's face, which is gazing right onward into the background.

There is in this group none of the strong, positive, insufficiently gradated colour, which is sometimes rather distressing in Raeburn's work. It is far quieter and more delicate than is altogether usual in his art, full of tenderness and subtlety ; the faces exquisitely lit by reflected light, their half-shadows softly luminous and delicate exceedingly, never sinking with a crash into blackness and opacity. The artist has seldom produced a finer or more artistic group, has seldom given us a more fascinating portrayal of well-born manhood and of female loveliness.

It is not at all in originality of general conception that the greatness of Raeburn's portraiture usually lies, in the novel groupings of its figures, or in any suggestion of story in their combinations. Some other painters have contrived to throw a hint of narrative into works which, in first and main aim, were mere likenesses ; but Raeburn was a portraitist in the strictest and most exclusive sense ; and he simply adopted the accepted poses of the figure that were current in the Scottish portraiture of his day, though to these his original genius gave a finer grace, catching from Nature an added ease. But in the grouping of this picture, and in its lighting—so abnormal in arrangement—we certainly have as definite a departure as could well be imagined, from the stock traditions that have guided the art of portraiture from time immemorial ; and some other reason than a purely technical one is suggested by the marked originality of the work, in both conception and treatment. Was this strange and most unusual distribution of light in the picture a mere artistic experiment in chiaro-

scuro ? Did the painter devote half of his canvas to an extended landscape vista, merely in honour of the Baronet's ancestral acres ; and was that pose of regardant countenance and interlacing arms selected only because it made for a graceful flow of changeful line ? Hardly was all this the case, one fancies.

May it not, then, be conceivable that when the portrait had been commissioned, and while its details and way of treatment were being discussed by the pair—painter and baronet—as they sat together, in quiet after-dinner hour over their wine, in this very room where the completed picture now holds its place,—is it not just conceivable that Sir John, in some such time of genial heart-expansion, as he poised his glass to catch the last warm gleam of summer evening light that streamed across the darkening woods,—that the childless man, beginning now to verge gently towards age, may have been stirred by ancient memories, and have told the artist of some bygone scene to which these ancestral woods were once the witness ? Is it a walk of plighted lovers that the painter hints at on his canvas, and has the bride just caught first sight of her future home ? Or, can the scene be one tenderer still ? The middle-aged lover looks—calmly, earnestly expectant, waiting for an answer that will not come from the lady's lips, that will certainly not be given by their *words*—at the noble face of the mature and stately beauty by his side, into her dear grey eyes that never meet his, but gaze right on into the distance—into the future is it ? Has the painter then meant to show us one of those strenuous, delicately-poised moments that come in mortal lives, when “words are mere mistake,” when

“A lip's mere tremble,  
Looks half hesitation, cheeks just change of colour,”

at once crystallise intensest emotion and afford its fullest expression, and sign and seal a human soul with final impress of success or failure ? Is—in

briefest English—the man waiting for the sign that will make him accepted or rejected lover?

This portrait, the chief treasure of Penicuik House, would surely possess enough of interest from the power of its artistry, and the romantic associations with which our fancy may possibly invest it; but its interest is deepened, and it gathers a yet more intimate charm when we have heard the beautiful old-world story connected with the lady's birth.

Of this curious episode there are varying versions extant, which are given and fully discussed by Ellen K. Goodwin, in a pamphlet (Kendal, 1886) reprinted from the "Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society." There is a puzzling difference between the date of 15th November 1745, given by Lady Clerk as the day of her birth, and that of 3d November which appears in the register of Kirkliston parish as the day of her baptism; but this discrepancy—we may suggest—would be lessened to within a single day, if her Ladyship has calculated according to New Style, introduced in Scotland in 1600, and the register has estimated by Old Style, current in England till 1752; while the presence of the Highlanders at Carlisle at the time would be accounted for if they crossed the border on "the 7th or 8th of November," New Style.

The following is the interesting version of the story, communicated by Lady Clerk herself to the Editor of "Blackwood's Magazine":—

"... The incident occurred November 15th, 1745. My father, Mr. Dacre, then an officer of His Majesty's Militia, was a prisoner in the Castle of Carlisle, at that time in the hands of Prince Charles. My mother (a daughter of Sir George le Fleming, Bart., Bishop of Carlisle) was living at Rose Castle, six miles from Carlisle, when she was delivered of me. She had given orders that I should immediately be privately baptized by the Bishop's chaplain (his Lordship not being at home)

by name of Rosemary Dacre. At that moment a company of Highlanders approached headed by a Captain Macdonald, who having heard there was much plate and valuables in the Castle came to plunder it. Upon the approach of the Highlanders, an old grey-headed servant ran out and entreated Captain Macdonald not to proceed, as any noise or alarm might cause the death of both lady and child. The Captain enquired where the lady had been confined. ‘Within this house,’ the servant answered. Captain Macdonald stopped. The servant added, ‘They are just going to christen the infant.’ Macdonald, taking off his cockade, said, ‘Let her be christened with this cockade in her cap, it will be her protection now and after if any of our stragglers should come this way : we will wait the ceremony in silence,’ which they accordingly did, and they went into the coachyard, and were regaled with beef, cheese, and ale, then went off without the smallest disturbance. My white cockade was safely preserved and shown me from time to time, always reminding me to respect the Scotch, and Highlanders in particular. I think I have obeyed the injunction by spending my life in Scotland, and also by hoping to die there.

ROSEMARY CLERK.

“EDINBURGH, April 21, 1817.”

In memory of the event, Lady Clerk always wore the cockade, along with a white rose, upon her birthday. It has been said that she presented it to George iv. on the occasion of his visit to Scotland, and its existence, unfortunately, cannot now be traced : but a still living connection of the family informs us that she had seen the relic in the possession of Lady Clerk, at a more recent date than that of the royal progress.

It will be remembered that Scott, to whom in his youth Sir John and Lady Clerk had been kind, with his keen and appreciative eye for the

picturesque, has seized upon this incident and turned it to excellent account in the opening chapter of "The Monastery."

That white cockade, the symbol of a cause so full of poetry and romance, seems to have brought a benison with it to the babe Rosemary Dacre, to have dowered her with beauty, and gifted her with an unusually magnetic attractiveness. As she grew into fairest womanhood she had many lovers, declared and undeclared, and in the hearts of those who failed to win the lady her memory seems to have lingered tenderly with no touch of bitterness; to have been, to some of them, a kind of lifelong inspiration, evoking gentle wistful feelings, such as Dante Rossetti has so exquisitely recorded in one of the finest of his earlier poems, his "First Love Remembered."

Some curious records, some strange hints of the potent part which the lady of the white cockade, and the memory of her, played in the lives of certain men whom she never wedded are preserved at Penicuik, casketed in the dainty little Chippendale workbox that once was hers, among other personal relics,—her long black gloves, with a space of black lace inlet from palm to top; her cap edged with delicate lace; a long tress of her dark brown hair, marked "June the 6th, 1794, aged 48"; and her silhouette, cut in black paper, showing a strong dignified profile, beneath a tall hat, wound round with a veil.

Two of the interesting letters preserved in this quaint old workbox are from Lord Chancellor Eldon, who in his youth, as they clearly indicate, had been a lover of Rosemary Dacre; though the impression can hardly have been overwhelmingly deep or very permanent, for he was only twenty-one when he eloped with Bessy Surtees, a step which entailed the loss of his Oxford fellowship, closed his hopes of preferment in the Church, and obliged him with "a most kind Providence for my guide," as he says, to take to the study of law, one of his earliest legal efforts being the delivery, as Deputy-Vinerian

Professor for Sir Robert Chambers, of a lecture on “the statute of young men running away with maidens.” But in his youth the future Lord Chancellor was, as he used to confess, “very susceptible.” “Oh,” he would say, “these were happy days ; we were always in love then.”

The first letter of the old man of nearly eighty runs as follows :—

“ 14 April 1829.

“ DEAR MARY DACRE,—Pardon my use of a name, which belonged to you when I first knew you. I can sincerely assure you that I have often, often thought of the person who bore that name when I knew her, with, may I say, sentiments of most sincere affection.? If I had been Lord Stowell, her name now might neither have been Molly Dacre, nor Mary, Lady Clarke.

“ Thank you a thousand Times, thank you for your Letter, which I have this moment received. I would thank you more at large if I could delay in an hour, in which I am much engaged, to thank you, but that I cannot persuade myself to do.

“ I have done my best to defeat this disastrous measure. If I am wrong God forgive me! if I am right God forgive others, if He can ! Lady Eldon, Bessy Surtees, sends her Love to you with that of,

Yr obliged and affectionate Friend,

ELDON.

Mary Lady Clarke,  
100 Princess Street,  
Edinburgh.”

The second letter is written, on the 29th of June in the same year “as Lady Eldon’s Secretary” to thank Lady Clerk for a present of jewellery.

“ . . . After the Lapse of so many years to be remembered by one whom we remember, I can most sincerely say, with Respect and affection, is perhaps the most gratifying circumstance that

could have happened to either of us. I feel the Value of your kindness to her ten thousand Times more than any that could have been shown to myself. She will wear the Ornaments from you and the Grampians as in Truth the most valuable she has, as long as she lives, and we shall both take some Pains to secure its being, in the possession of those who follow after us, an heir Loom. I know not why we search the World over for Diamonds, when the Grampians can furnish what equals, if it does not surpass them, in beauty and brilliancy.

“ How often have Lady Eldon and I—distant as we are from your Habitation—fancied that we have been looking at Molly Dacre, and listening to ‘Auld Robin Gray’ sung exquisitely by her? eyes and ears alike highly gratified. Excuse this—remember that it comes from one, who, in his last Letter, expressed a wish that he had been THE ELDER BROTHER.

“ With Lady E’s Thanks and affectionate Regards,

Yr

Dear Madam,  
Eldon.

ELIZ: ELDON.”

The allusion at the close of the first letter is to the Catholic Relief Bill which Lord Eldon so strenuously opposed. Only four days before the date of the note his name had headed the protest of the Peers against the measure.

The Lord Stowell referred to is the Chancellor’s elder brother, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty. He was born in the same year as Mary Dacre, and, curiously enough, his birth also was associated with the presence of the Pretender’s army. As in the other case there are varying versions of the story. One tradition asserts that the town of Newcastle being fortified and closed in anticipation of the approach of the Jacobites, who were then in possession of

Edinburgh, it was thought that his mother should be removed to a quieter place, in anticipation of her confinement; and that this was effected by her being lowered in a large basket into a boat in the river and conveyed to Heworth, a village four miles distant. The other version assigns the perilous descent to Dr. Hallo-wel, her medical attendant, who was let down from the top of the town wall of Newcastle in order to be present at Heworth at the critical moment.

The remaining letters afford even a more curious glimpse of the fascination which Rosemary Dacre exercised upon those who came within the circle of her influence. The first is addressed to her husband's nephew and successor the Right Hon. Sir George Clerk, and is dated—

“ CHITTON LODGE,  
3 June 1830.

“ MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,—Enclosed I send you Capt. Morris's verses which I mentioned to you. The circumstances which occasioned them were the following. Lord Stowell, Lord Sidmouth, and Capt. Morris, with some other Friends, were dining with me last Spring, when Lord Stowell remarked that although Capt. Morris was the same age as himself he was much more active and elastic. Capt. Morris attributed this to his having been ardently in Love for the whole of his Life; and on being pressed to disclose the object of his passion confessed that it was Lady Clarke, who at the age of sixteen won his affection, and that although he had been since married she had never ceased to exercise an influence on his heart, and be a source of animation. Lord Stowell immediately acknowledged that by a remarkable coincidence he also had been enamoured of Lady Clarke, and at the same age of sixteen, and that although twice married, the recollection of her charms had not been effaced from his mind. This of course gave rise to much mirth among the company, Lord Sidmouth particularly laughing at

*Morris*

*Aug 1830*

the Lovers, who at the age of eighty-four declared that their passion was undiminished towards a Lady who had attained the same age,

I am,  
My dear Sir George,  
Yours truly,  
JOHN PEARSE."

Then follows a copy of the enclosure from Captain Morris of the Life Guards, who, it may be remarked, was a well-known politician and popular song-writer, and a boon companion of the wits at Brooks. His portrait, engraved by Greatbach, is given in an early volume of "Bentley's Miscellany," and another portrait, painted by James Lonsdale, was recently acquired by the National Portrait Gallery, London.

"No. 1 THORNHAUGH ST.  
BEDFORD SQ.  
May 29, 1829.

MY DEAR SIR,—Looking in my Scrap Book to-day, I find a few Stanzas, on my *deathless Passion* for my *first love*, written in my latter days, and as such an extraordinary and singular coincidence on that subject occurred at your table on Wednesday, I take the liberty of enclosing them to you, the more so as Lady Sidmouth is a correspondent, and perhaps might have no objection to honour them with a perusal; if you think so, and will let her Ladyship see them, I beg permission to commit them to your care, and I remain,

My dear Sir,  
Most gratefully and faithfully  
Yours,  
CHAS. MORRIS."

XX

"I beg leave to add that it is sixty-eight years since I lived in Carlisle with my Father and mother. Lady Clark will of course have no recollection of my *Boyish adoration*, but to recall it, if possible, to her memory, I would wish her to

know that it is Chas. Morris, son of Col. Morris, of the 17th Regt., who lived with my mother at Carlisle, and with whom Lady Clark and the Dacre Family were acquainted."

Then follows the brave old jingle of rhyme which the ever-faithful lover had made in praise of his lady :—

" Though years have spread around my Head  
 The sober Veil of Reason,  
 To close in Night sweet Fancy's light,  
 My Heart rejects as Treason ;  
 A spark there lies, still fann'd by Sighs,  
 Ordained by Beauty's maker,  
 And fix'd by Fate, burns yet, tho' late,  
 For lovely Molly Dacre.

Oh ! while I miss the days of Bliss  
 I pass'd in rapture gazing,  
 The Dream impress'd still charms my breast  
 Which Fancy ever raising.  
 Tho' much I meet in Life is sweet,  
 My Soul can ne'er forsake her,  
 And all I feel, still bears the Seal  
 Of lovely Molly Dacre !

Whene'er her course in chaise or horse  
 Conveyed her to our city,  
 How did I gaze, in bliss'd amaze  
 To catch her smile of pity ;  
 And round her door the night I wore,  
 Still mute as any Quaker,  
 With hope-fed Zeal, one glance to steal  
 From lovely Molly Dacre.

When rumour dear proclaimed her near,  
 Her charms a crowd amazing,  
 How would I start with panting Heart  
 To catch her eye when passing.  
 When home she turned, I ran, I burned  
 O'er many a distant Acre,  
 To hope by chance one parting glance  
 From lovely Molly Dacre.

I 've often thought the happy lot  
 Of Health and Spirits lent me,  
 Is deem'd as due to faith so true,  
 And thus by Fate is sent me.  
 While here she be there 's life for me,  
 And when high Heaven shall take her,  
 Alike last breath, I 'll ask of Death  
 To follow Molly Dacre.

M."

Surely it was with true significance that Rosemary Dacre's seal—the seal which always descends to her name-child in the house of Penicuik—was engraved with the sign of a single star, shedding a benign and steadfast light over a pathless vastitude of air and a fluctuating waste of sea ; for the Lady's memory seems to have shone with an ideal light through many human lives.

### VIII.

The next portrait by Raeburn represents John Clerk of Eldin, the seventh son of Baron Clerk, second Baronet of Penicuik, and author of the celebrated "Enquiry into Naval Tactics." He was educated at the Grammar School of Dalkeith and the University of Edinburgh, and in that city he engaged in business as a merchant till about 1772, when he purchased the property of Eldin, in the parish of Lasswade, and obtained a post in connection with the Exchequer, the secretaryship to the Commissioners on the Annexed Estates in Scotland. He was a man of a vigorous and active mind, and seems to have possessed equal aptitudes for art and science. Some of his sketches are dated as early as 1758, but it was in 1770 that he began to etch upon copper, and in the next twelve years he produced a series of over a hundred plates. These are founded upon a careful study of the old Dutch masters of the art. In their topographical aspect they are of great interest as portraying many ancient buildings which have since been removed or altered ; and as examples of etching, in spite of certain amateurish defects, they form a curious connecting-link between the period of Rembrandt and the early days of our own century, when the process was taken up and carried to such fine artistic issues by two other Scotsmen, Geddes and Wilkie. A large collection of Mr. Clerk's etchings and drawings is preserved in the Library at Penicuik. A series of the former, tinted by Robert Adam, the celebrated architect, whose sister, Susannah, Mr. Clerk had married in 1753,

was presented to George III. in 1786, at the suggestion of the Earl of Buchan. Twenty-eight of them were issued to members of the Bannatyne Club in 1825, and other of the coppers having been recovered, a series of fifty-five etchings and reproductions of sketches were issued to the same Club in 1855 with an admirable memoir by David Laing.

In his scientific pursuits Clerk was the intimate associate of Dr. James Hutton, whose geological papers his pencil was ever ready to illustrate, and it is believed that the Professor's "Theory of the Earth" owed something to his friend's suggestions. The first part of Clerk's celebrated "Enquiry into Naval Tactics" was published in 1782, and the second, third, and fourth parts were added in 1797. Though a work of great interest and value, the assertion that it was the means of Rodney's adopting that mode of breaking the enemy's line which led to the celebrated victory off Dominique on 12th April 1782, seems to be one incapable of absolute proof. We have a pleasant characterisation of him, *à propos* of his death, May 1812, in Lord Cockburn's "Memorials":—

"An interesting and delightful old man; full of the peculiarities that distinguished the whole family—talent, caprice, obstinacy, worth, kindness, and oddity, . . . he was looked up to with deference by all the philosophers of his day, who were in the habit of constantly receiving hints and views from him, which they deemed of great value. He was a striking-looking old gentleman, with his grizzly hair, vigorous features, and Scotch speech. It would be difficult to say whether jokes or disputation pleased him most."

"A striking-looking old gentleman" he certainly shows in Raeburn's portrait—which, technically, is an excellent example of the 'square touch' and vigorous modelling of that painter—with the strong face, clear light yellowish eyes, broad forehead, and white hair, rising from the high-collared old-fashioned coat. The picture has been lithographed by A. Hahnisch in the 1855 Bannatyne Club issue of the etchings, and the personality of its subject

may be gathered from two other portraits ;—a crayon likeness by Skirving, showing less of dignity and more of shrewdness, which passed by bequest to the Blair Adam family, and was admirably mezzotinted by S. W. Reynolds in 1800 ; and a three-quarters length portrait in oils by James Saxon, now in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, where he is represented seated at a table holding a plan which depicts his naval manœuvre of breaking the line. The latter belonged to the father of W. H. Carpenter of the British Museum, who caused the ships in the distance to be painted in by William Anderson.

The remaining example of Raeburn at Penicuik House is a portrait of Mr. Clerk's eldest son, John Clerk, Lord Eldin. Lord Cockburn tells a pretty story of the relation between the two. “‘I remember,’ the father used to say, ‘the time when people seeing John limping on the street, used to ask what lame lad that was ; and the answer would be, That’s the son of Clerk of Eldin. But now, when I myself am passing, I hear them saying, What auld grey-headed man is that ? And the answer is, That’s the father of John Clerk.’ He was much prouder of the last mark than the first.”

From his earliest years the future judge possessed all that love for art which has been constant in the family of Clerk ; his own drawings possess considerable vigour and character. He was an enthusiastic collector, and the crowd that was gathered in his house in Picardy Place, Edinburgh, at the sale of his collection after his death in 1832 was so excessive that the floor gave way, causing the death of one person, and the serious injury of several others. Vigorous and lifelike sketches of his vehemence and wit and curiously eccentric and powerful personality will be found in the pages of Lord Cockburn and in “Peter’s Letters to his Kinsfolk.” From their student days Raeburn and he were chosen friends, and it must have been about the date of the present

portrait that the whimsical episode occurred which Allan Cunningham records in his account of the painter, an account that has left little to be gleaned by later biographers. "Raeburn received an invitation to dine with Clerk, and hastening to his lodgings, he found the landlady spreading a cloth on the table, and setting down two dishes, one containing three herrings and the other three potatoes. 'And is this all?' said John. 'All,' said the landlady. 'All! Did I not tell ye, woman,' he exclaimed, 'that a gentleman was to dine with me, and that ye were to get six herrings and six potatoes?' The tables of both were better furnished before the lapse of many years; and they loved, it is said, when the wine was flowing, to recall those early days, when hope was high and the spirit unrebuked by intercourse with the world."

The present portrait shows Clerk in the character of a budding barrister. The figure is life-sized, seated, seen in three-quarters to the left, the wigged head turned nearly in pure profile to the left. The figure, clad in black coat, black satin vest, and knee-breeches of the same, and with ruffs at breast and wrists, lies back easily in the chair, the right hand extending over its arm, and holding a law paper, the left placed, with out-spread fingers, on the table in front, which is covered with a richly tinted cloth, on which lie "Stair's Institutes," the "Regiam Magista," and other volumes in "law-calf," while on the other side, as though to hint at the advocate's artistic tastes, appears a cast of a classical head, just as in the later Raeburn portrait a little bronze version of the Crouching Venus nestles among the bundles of briefs. The face, wearing an expression of great earnestness and intentness, is as yet beardless, unformed, and rather heavy-looking; different indeed from the emphatic furrowed countenance that appears in the later portraits which show him when age had developed his full individuality. The eyes are pale bluish grey, and the eyebrows very light in colour.

There are no other early portraits of Lord Eldin, by which we can judge of his appearance at the time that this one was executed. The admirable three-quarter seated portrait by Raeburn, where he appears holding his spectacles in his right hand, and with the other supporting a folio which rests on a table, shows him in later life. It passed by bequest to the house of Riccarton, and has been powerfully mezzotinted by Charles Turner, the plate appearing, after it had been reduced in size, in the Bannatyne volume of Mr. Clerk's Etchings, 1855. A somewhat similarly arranged portrait, of cabinet size, painted by Andrew Geddes, another of Lord Eldin's artistic friends, was in the possession of the late Mr. James Gibson Craig; and there is the lithograph by B. W. Crombie, a bust-portrait, in ordinary dress, executed in June 1837, showing in the shrewd profile face much of that "thoroughbred shaggy terrier" aspect upon which Lord Cockburn remarks in his "*Life of Jeffrey*"; and also the bust by Joseph, engraved in line by Robert Bell, of which a cast is in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

In addition to these there are several caricatures which doubtless preserve much that was characteristic of the man. There is the etching by Kay, in the plate of "*Twelve Advocates who Plead with Wigs on*," showing an eager countenance, with opened mouth and protruding under lip; and the four very vivid and lifelike sketches by Robert Scott Moncrieff, reproduced in "*The Scottish Bar Fifty Years Ago*." The first of these latter shows him in suppressed—but most belligerent—mood seated as an advocate listening to the pleadings of the council on the opposite side, with mouth compressed, and lips drawn down at the ends, his left hand grasping his spectacle-case, the other cast over the arm of his chair and grasping his papers. Another shows him pacing the floor of the Parliament House, briefs in hand, his gown trailing behind him, his wig perched knowingly in front, his spectacles pushed far up

his forehead,—much as Carlyle, in his “Reminiscences,” records that he saw him, when he visited the Parliament House in 1809, on his arrival in Edinburgh to begin his student-life. “The only figure I distinctly recollect, and got printed on my brain that night, was John Clerk, then veritably hitching about, whose grim, strong countenance, with its black far-projecting brows and look of great sagacity, fixed him in my memory.” The third of Mr. Moncrieff’s drawings shows him in the full fury of his vehement eloquence as a pleader, his gown flying about him in mighty folds, his right fist clenched and raised in excited action. A fourth sketch, a rather terrible one, depicts him in latest age, seated on the bench, his hands laid in front and muffled in his judge’s gown, his great mouth with its prominent under lip firmly set, and his small eyes keenly observant through his spectacles. One other caricature remains to be noticed, the little etching marked “X. Y. Z.,” which is often to be found bound up along with copies of his sale catalogue, showing him in full-length ascending a flight of stairs, snuffbox in hand.

In the Business-room there hangs a small portrait of Lord Eldin’s younger brother, William Clerk, advocate—“only less witty and odd than his great Swiftian brother,” as Dr. John Brown has truly remarked—who figures so prominently in the biography and correspondence of Sir Walter Scott. At college they were contemporaries and bosom friends, they passed their Civil Law and their Scots Law examinations on the same day, and together assumed the advocate’s gown. It was in his company that the young Scott, after a fishing expedition to Howgate, visited Penicuik House, when he “was overwhelmed with kindness by the late Sir John Clerk and his lady”—the pair who figure in the great Raeburn group, and when “the pleasure of looking at fine pictures, the beauty of the place, and the flattering hospitality of the owners drowned the recollection of home for a day or two.” The friendship thus

begun was continued through life ; and in his latest years Scott dwells, in his Diary, with especial gusto upon the snug little dinners in Rose Court, Edinburgh, when a few chosen spirits gathered round Clerk's bachelor board.

The present picture, a cabinet-sized bust, is somewhat amateurish in its execution, but still full of character and individuality ; the features of the shrewd, wrinkled face, its definitely curved nose, sharply-cut mouth, thin compressed lips, and dark, brilliantly blue eyes beneath the bushy white eyebrows, combine into what is doubtless a faithful rendering of that friend of whom Scott wrote in his Diary, in 1825, "I have known him intimately since our college days ; and to my thinking I never met a man of greater powers or more complete information on all desirable subjects." It is the work of Mrs. Hugh Blackburn, a lady so well known for her excellent renderings of birds and animals ; but another oil-portrait of William Clerk, a cabinet-sized bust, turned to the right and dated 1843, the work of Miss Isabella Clerk, sister of the seventh Baronet, is also preserved at Penicuik.

Among the portraits of more recent members of the Clerk family are various works representing their eminent politician and statistical authority, the Right Hon. Sir George Clerk, D.C.L., the sixth Baronet, who repeatedly represented the county of Mid-Lothian in Parliament ; who was a Lord of the Admiralty under the Liverpool Administration ; succeeded Mr. Gladstone as Master of the Mint in 1845, and in the same year was appointed Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and a member of the Privy Council. Several miniatures representing him are preserved in the Drawing-room, and there are also two life-sized three-quarter-length portraits in oil. That hung in the smaller Drawing-room is an excellent example by William Dyce, R.A., a distant connection of the family's, and was painted in 1830. It is executed with great delicacy, quietude, and reticence, and does full justice to the Baronet's refined and

handsome face, then in its prime. This picture has been excellently mezzotinted by Thomas Lupton. That in the Dining-room, painted by the vigorous hand of Sir John Watson Gordon, portrays Sir George in later life, seated in an easy chair, and holding one of the statistical blue-books which his soul loved. Of his wife, Maria, second daughter of Ewan Law of Horsted Place, Sussex, there is also an oil portrait in the Dining-room, showing a refined face, with a delicate complexion, bearing the trace of suffering in the firmly compressed yet pathetic mouth, and the straight dark eyebrows, which are knit a little and contracted over the pale grey wistful eyes. The picture has a rather slight and unfinished appearance, and is somewhat chalky in its whites. Its painter, the late J. R. Swinton, worked comparatively little in oils, and examples of his better-known crayon drawings may be studied in the portraits of the Dowager Lady Clerk and her sister-in-law, the Hon. Mrs. Elphinstone, which hang in the smaller Drawing-room.

It should also be noticed that many characteristic likenesses of the sixth Baronet are included in an interesting volume of sketches, done in old days by his niece Mrs. Hugh Blackburn, and now preserved at Penicuik, a series portraying familiar scenes there, and at Sir George's London residence in Park Street, Westminster,—card-parties and musical evenings in which Piatti and other eminent performers took part, days spent on the ice, or picnicking among the Pentlands, rides in the Park or over lonely stretches of moorland—drawings highly humorous, plentifully touched with caricature, yet including not a little substantial truth of portraiture.

There is also in the Dining-room an interesting cabinet-sized portrait of Sir George's younger brother, John Clerk Maxwell of Middleby, that genial, practical, individual Scotsman of whom a most interesting account is given in the life of his distinguished son, Professor James Clerk Maxwell. The picture is the work of his niece,

Miss Isabella Clerk, and shows some traces of the amateur, especially in the size and uncouthness of the hands, but a comparison with the engraving from the portrait by Watson Gordon, given in the above-mentioned volume, proves it to be a substantially faithful likeness of the good old man.

## IX.

We now come to glance at the portraits at Penicuik House which do not represent members of the Clerk family. Among the earliest of these, hung in the Dining-room, is a three-quarter-length seated portrait of Sir Archibald Primrose, Lord Carrington, that ancestor of the Rosebery family who played an important part in politics during the Restoration period, who fought under Montrose, was captured at Philiphaugh, and barely escaped being executed for treason ; who was appointed Lord Clerk Register in 1660, and Lord Justice-General in 1676, presiding, in that office, at the trial in 1678, of Mitchell for the attempted assassination of Archbishop Sharp ; and whose later years were spent in steady opposition to the administration of the Duke of Lauderdale. He is styled by Burnet "the subtelist of all Lord Middletoun's friends, a man of long and great practice in affairs . . . ; a dextrous man of business, he had always expedients ready at every difficulty." In the picture he appears in his black, gold-laced robes as Lord Clerk Register, his right hand resting on the arm of his chair, the left raised, and his face seen in three-quarters to the right, with its thin prominent nose drooping at the point, small chin, and lips rising towards the ends and pursed and dimpled a little at the corners. A similar picture, but only bust-sized, stated (*Catalogue of Royal Scottish Academy Loan Exhibition, 1863*) to be dated 1670, has been long at Dalmeny, and a copy of it was presented by Lord Rosebery to the Faculty of Advocates in 1883, and now hangs in the Parliament House. His Lordship has

recently acquired, from the Rothes Collection, another, a three-quarter length, version of the picture ; and we are informed that there is also a similar-sized version in the possession of Lord Elphinstone. A portrait of Sir Archibald Primrose appears in Mr. A. H. Millar's list of the portraits at Kinnaird Castle, but we have not examined this work, and cannot say whether it is a repetition of the present portrait.

Two interesting oil pictures showing Charles, third Duke of Queensberry, and his celebrated Duchess, hang near the portrait of Lord Carrington. The Duke, the correspondent of Swift, painted rather dryly and hardly by Miss Ann Forbes, whose work we have already referred to, is seen to below the waist, clad in peer's robes, the figure turned towards the right. The face, shown in three-quarters, closely resembles that in the cabinet-sized bust in oils at Ballochmyle, and in the mezzotint engraved in 1773, by Valentine Green after George Willison, with the same high cheek-bones, and prominent high-bridged nose, and the eyes are of a warm brown colour ; but the face is older than in either of the other portraits, grave and worn, and covered with wrinkles.

The companion portrait of the Duchess, "Prior's Kitty, ever young," the eccentric patroness of Gay, a work by Aikman, recalls in most of its details her portrait by Charles Jervas, in the National Portrait Gallery, London. She is shown in three-quarters length, slim, graceful, and youthful, clad in a coquettish country costume, a dress of greyish brown, of dainty proportions at the waist, low-breasted, and with short sleeves that display the well-turned arms, with a small white apron, and a little close cap set on the head and almost entirely concealing the dark brown hair. The face, with its blue eyes and fresh delicate complexion, is drooping a little, turned in three-quarters to the left ; her left hand rests on the edge of a milk-pail, and her right holds what appears to be a broad round-brimmed

*Duke & Duchess*

*Queensbury*

*Kitty*

*Duchess of 2.*

hat. The background is a landscape, with rocks and trees rising behind the lady to the left, and with a stretch of green meadow to the right—in which, however, no figures appear, as in the National Portrait Gallery picture,—and a space of blue sky faintly tinged with red towards the horizon.

We are informed that these three last-named works were acquired at a sale, about the end of the last century.

*8<sup>th</sup> Earl  
Pembroke*

Near them hangs a three-quarter-length portrait which forms an interesting memorial of one of the second Baronet's most congenial friendships. It represents that prominent statesman in the days of Queen Anne and George I., Thomas, eighth Earl of Pembroke, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1707, a man of great refinement and varied culture, President of the Royal Society, of which body Baron Clerk was elected a member in 1728, "an honour"—as he states in his "History"—"I value much." Clerk first made his acquaintance during his student-days at Leyden, when the Earl was acting as First Plenipotentiary at the Treaty of Ryswick. In his account of that Treaty in the "History of my Own Times," Bishop Burnet remarks that "there was something in his person and manner that created him an universal respect; for we had no man among us whom all sides loved and honoured as they did him." In 1726 Clerk tells us that he corresponded with Lord Pembroke upon classical and antiquarian subjects; it was then that the Earl "sent me his Picture which is now among the Ornaments of Mavisbank," one of Sir John's houses; and after he visited London in the following year, and examined its chief artistic collections, he records with delight his pilgrimage to his friend's seat of Wilton, and his appreciation of the princely gathering of statues, coins, medals, etc., which he had brought together there, and especially of his great ancestral treasure, the Van Dyck group of Earl Philip and his family. The eighth Earl, it may be noticed, died in January

1732-3, not 1702-3, as given in Noble's "Granger," or 1722-3, as stated by Chaloner Smith. *correction*

In the portrait he appears in three-quarters length, clad in armour, with a lace cravat, and a long dark curling wig, the jewel of the Garter being suspended by its blue ribbon under his right arm. The figure is turned to the left, but the sallow, shaven face, with its dark eyes appearing from beneath bushy black eyebrows, looks in three-quarters to the right. His right hand is raised holding a baton, behind which is placed a helmet, the left rests on a gold-hilted sword ; and there is a rocky background, disclosing a space of sky and sea with a ship and boats.

The picture is evidently a version of the portrait of the Earl painted by William Wissing, mezzotinted by John Smith in a plate to which the date of 1709 has been assigned, though the painting must have been executed much earlier, as Wissing died in 1687. The naval background is stated to be from the brush of "Vandevelde," having evidently been introduced by that artist, after the death of the original painter of the work, at the time when the Earl was appointed Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, a post which he held in 1701, and again in 1708. The younger William Vandevelde must be the artist indicated, as the elder painter of the same name died in 1693.

Among the other portraits in the Dining-room may be mentioned a fine three-quarters length of the Earl of Denbigh, by Lely ; a vigorous bust-portrait of the Duke of Norfolk, by Kneller,—the eighth Duke, as is proved by the robe and collar of the Garter which appear in the picture ; and a copy from the well-known Janssen portrait of Drummond of Hawthornden, in the possession of the Earl of Home : while the portraits of Prince Charles Edward and of his wife the Princess Stolberg, known as the Countess of Albany, though sufficiently indifferent works of art, possess a certain interest as having been presented to

Rosemary Clerk by Miss Law of Princes Street, Edinburgh, after she had heard the tale of the White Cockade, as recorded by Lady Clerk herself, in the postscript to her letter to the Editor of "Blackwood's Magazine," which we have already quoted.

## X.

In the Corridor hangs an important and striking portrait of Lord Godolphin, probably from the hand of William Aikman, a work doubtless acquired by the Baron as representing an eminent English statesman with whom he had been brought into contact about the time of the Union. The figure is seen to below the waist, turned in three-quarters to the right ; and the face is more individual and characteristic, if less dignified and well conditioned, than that which appears in Houbraken's line-engraving, or in Smith's mezzotint after Kneller. The nose is small and clear-cut, the mouth has a thin upper lip drawn inwards a little, the eyebrows are straight, slight, and of a dark brown colour, and there are strong lines on the cheeks curving downwards from the nostrils. A long grey curling wig is worn, and a claret-coloured coat, with a plain cravat falling in front ; and a ruddy cloak is wrapped round the waist, and passed over the left arm. His right hand rests against his side, and his left is laid gracefully over a parapet.

In the same Corridor, hung over a door in an exceedingly bad light, is a bust-portrait titled on the back, in an old hand, "Calderwood the Historian by Jamesone." The costume is a small black cap and a black doublet with a round ruff. The face, seen in three-quarters to the right, against a dark background, is full of intelligence ; the features small, the eyes grey, the moustache and beard of a moderate length, yellowish-brown in colour. The flesh-tints are ruddy, inclining, indeed, to an unduly hot tone, but the picture has evidently been much repainted. It is undoubtedly a production of the period indicated in

the inscription, and resembles works that have been attributed to Jamesone ; but we are not acquainted with any duly authenticated portrait of the historian of the Kirk of Scotland with which it might be compared.

The excellent bust-portrait in the Drawing-room, attributed to Holbein, is certainly incorrectly titled as representing Sir Thomas More. This vigorous, ruddy, bearded countenance is quite unlike the worn, shaven, student's face which appears in the Chancellor's authentic portraits by Holbein,—in his two drawings in the Royal Collection at Windsor, and in the pen sketch, for the lost oil picture of the Family of Sir Thomas More, which he himself sent to his friend Erasmus, by the hand of the painter, when Holbein returned to the Continent in 1529, a sketch still preserved in the Museum of Basle.

Again, the curious, but much injured, panel picture in the smaller Drawing-room, of a lady wearing a white pipe-frilled cap, with a bowed veil over it, titled "Mary of Guise," shows no resemblance to such authentic portraits of the Queen as that at Hardwick, in which she appears with her husband King James v. ; and the impaled lozenge on the background bears no trace of the arms of either Lorraine or Scotland.

## XI.

We have now to examine the mural decorations of Penicuik House, which include the celebrated Ossian ceiling of the room designed for a picture-gallery, and now used as the Drawing-room. But first, two smaller cupolas surmounting the staircases which give access to the upper floor of the mansion are deserving of notice. One is decorated in upright compartments, showing Jupiter in his car drawn by snakes, wielding his thunderbolts, with a moonlit landscape beneath, and on the other side a figure of Apollo, with yellow rays circling his head, driving his team of fiery white steeds over a landscape which is beginning to

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blush beneath the rosy light of dawn. Between these are ranged a series of allegorical figures of the Months, each marked with a sign of the Zodiac, and surrounded by scrolls, grotesque birds, and beasts, and vases. The whole is relieved against a light green background, and the compartments are divided by broad bands of ochre.

This curious example of the decorative art of the end of the last century is the work of John Bonnar, then a decorative painter in Edinburgh; and when, a hundred years after its execution, his grandson and great-grandson, who were at the time pursuing the same business in the same city, cleaned and restored the work, along with the Runciman ceilings, their ancestor's signature was disclosed upon a corner of its surface.

*Runciman*

The other cupola is decorated by the hand of Alexander Runciman, with scenes from the life of St. Margaret of Scotland, whose history furnished only the other year a subject for the brush of another of the most imaginative of our Scottish painters, Sir Noel Paton. Curiously enough we can find no single reference to this important St. Margaret series in any of the biographies of Runciman, or in the anonymous pamphlet, published in 1773, which so elaborately describes the ceiling of the Ossian Hall. Both series are executed in oil colours upon the plaster. Here the decorations consist of four oval compartments, each occupied with a scene from the life of the Queen.

The first shows "The Landing of St. Margaret." Its background is a rich blue sky, and a distance of stormy sea. In the centre is King Malcolm, clad in a broad Scottish bonnet with a little white plume, red knee-breeches, white hose and white shoes with ample rosettes, and with a red cloak flapping around him in voluminous folds. With one hand he leads the lady, robed in a yellow mantle and a white dress, her long yellow hair tossed by the wind, and with the other points energetically towards the church before them,

where white-robed monks, with clasped hands, are awaiting their arrival.

The second subject is "The Royal Wedding." The pair are being united by a venerable and aged ecclesiastic with a grey beard, whose bronzed, weather-beaten countenance tells splendidly against his elaborate white vestments. To his right is the King, crowned and robed in red, placing the ring on the hand of the Queen, who stands draped in gold-brocaded white and green. An altar appears to our right, and beside it a mail-clad knight, with head bowed in worship. The figures of women are introduced to our left, and white flowers and a steaming censer lie on the ruddy marble pavement beneath.

The third subject shows the manner of the saint's queenship. She is known to her people in the breaking of bread; clad in the same robes that she wore at the marriage festival, she is feeding the poor, and her husband, in his red mantle and wearing his royal crown, follows in attendance upon her, bearing a heaped platter.

The fourth subject shows the final development of Queen Margaret's saintship. Having on earth filled herself with the life of heaven, she is now seen, white-clad, and with a red robe falling from her shoulders like the mortal life that she is done with, ascending inevitably into skies, where the clouds dispart to disclose the benignant figure of the Almighty Father and the white shape of the Holy Dove. Beneath is outspread a familiar landscape which she is leaving for ever—the Fife-shire hills appear on the right on the farther side of the Firth, and beneath is the town of Edinburgh, with the Palace, and the Castle rock crested with her chapel, and to the left the Pentlands which overlook Penicuik, with a kindly ray streaming from above, and irradiating their summit.

In spite of all deductions that may be made on account of occasional crudities and defects, and of the glaring anachronisms of costume that are apt to offend our more archæologically cultured eyes, the series is a remarkable one, with great rich-

ness and variety of colouring, and with a dramatic power which goes directly to the heart of the legendary tale, and portrays its incidents in a vivid and impressive manner. Dealing for the most part with definite history, the series is more complete in its realisation than was possible in some of the visionary subjects from Ossian which the painter afterwards essayed in the Hall of Penicuik House.

The three last-named subjects are signed : the second bears the date of "Sept. 7, 1772," the third "Octr. 14, 1772," and the fourth "Octr. 6, 1772." The inscriptions are interesting as showing that the subjects were executed immediately after the painter's return from Italy, and as illustrating the impetuous speed with which he must have worked.

## XII.

Runciman next turned to the larger undertaking of which the St. Margaret Cupola was but the prologue, and upon which he worked with equal energy, for the ceiling of the Ossian Hall of Penicuik House can hardly have been commenced before the end of 1772, and it was certainly completed during the following year.

It was just ten years previously that "Fingal" (1762) and "Temora" (1763) first appeared, and the controversy regarding their authenticity still raged fiercely. Dr. Johnson and David Hume denied their claim to be regarded as genuine Celtic poems, but they were defended by Lord Kames, Dr. Gregory, and by Dr. Blair, who pointed out their adaptability to the purposes of the painter, as presenting fitting subjects for the exercise of his brush. It was probably upon this suggestion that the Ossian ceiling was commissioned by Sir James Clerk, and commenced by Alexander Runciman.

The centre of the ceiling is occupied by a large elliptical compartment, depicting Ossian old and blind, singing, and accompanying his songs on the

harp. In front is seated the white-draped shape of Malvina, and around are grouped a varied crowd of listeners. The distance is a rocky coast, with ruined castles, and a fine expanse of sea, across which white sails are speeding ; and above, the clouds take strange, fantastic, half-defined shapes as of spiritual presences, the figures of the vanished heroes of whom the poet sings,—“The awful faces of other times look from the clouds of Crona.” This compartment is surrounded by an ornamental border of gold, which in its turn is enclosed in a wreath of vine-leaves and fruit ; and the four corners are occupied by figures symbolical of the four great rivers of Scotland, the Tay, the Spey, the Clyde, and the Tweed,—figures manifestly reminiscent of the work of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel.

Beneath, round the ample cove or *volto* of the room, is ranged a series of smaller subjects from Ossian—“The Valour of Oscar,” “The Death of Oscar,” “The Death of Agandecca,” “The Hunting of Catholda,” one of the finest of the subjects, very graceful in the figure of the nymph drawing a bow ; “The Finding of Corban Cargloss,” an attractive moonlit scene ; “Golchossa mourning over Lamderg,” “Oina Morval serenading Ossian,” a vigorous subject of “Cormac attacking the Spirit of the Waters,” “The Death of Cormac,” “Scandinavian Wizards at their Incantations,” in which the grotesque is in excess of the terrible, and “Fingal engaging the Spirit of Lodi.”

If we were to criticise the ceiling purely as an example of decorative art, we might well object that the elaboration and wealth of detail in the work is hardly suitable to its position, that designs so placed should have been simpler and more salient in their component parts, and executed in a lighter and more airy scheme of colouring, so as to carry the eye freely upwards. But as an example of poetic art, in its earnestness of aim and vigour of conception, it is deserving of all praise, as one of the very few instances that Scotland has to show of a serious effort to produce a

monumental work, a pictorial epic,—an effort honourable alike to the painter and his patron. The art of Runciman, as here displayed, may be regarded as the precursor of the art of David Scott, another of Scotland's most imaginative painters, who was also powerfully attracted by the Ossianic legends, choosing “*Fingal and the Spirit of Lodi*” for the subject of one of his earliest works, and in another depicting Ossian himself, not surrounded by sympathetic listeners as in this central compartment by Runciman, but seated alone by the sea-shore, amid the last dying radiance of a sunset, with his harp lying idle by his side.

It is recorded that about 1720 John Alexander, the grandson of George Jamesone of Aberdeen, executed a “*Rape of Proserpina*” on a staircase in Gordon Castle. After the completion of his work at Penicuik Runciman decorated a church in the Cowgate of Edinburgh (now St. Patrick's Catholic Chapel) with sacred subjects, of which a portion still remain; and—presumably in humble imitation of the Ossian Hall—Alexander Carse painted an oval subject on the ceiling of the “*Pennecuik Parlor*” of New Hall, Mid-Lothian, depicting “The Troops of Tweedale in the Forest of Selkirkshire, convened by Royal authority in May 1685, as described in Dr. Pennecuik's Poems.” This brief list may be said to include almost all the mural art—excepting such as was simply decorative—executed in Scotland during modern times.

The Ossian ceiling formed the subject of a learned and elaborate descriptive pamphlet, published anonymously, in 1773, by A. Kinnaird and W. Creech, Edinburgh; and the painter would appear to have intended to preserve a record of his work—in the manner afterwards adopted by Barry, in the case of the illustrations of “*Human Progress*,” with which he decorated the walls of the Hall of the Society of Arts in London, for etchings, executed by Runciman's own hand in a free and somewhat loose style, of the first two subjects of the St. Margaret Cupola, and of

"Cormac attacking a Spirit of the Waters," and "The Finding of Corban Cargloss," from the Ossian ceiling, are frequently to be met with.

We have not been able to discover in Penicuik House Alexander Runciman's easel Picture of "Nausicaa at Play with her Maidens," executed during his residence at Rome, and shown in London, in the Free Society of Artists' Exhibition of 1767, a work which Allan Cunningham informs us was "painted for Pennycuik": and, on account of the delicacy and transparency of its colouring, we should be inclined to attribute to John Runciman, who died at Naples at the early age of twenty-four, that sketch of "David with the Head of Goliath," which has been commonly assigned to the elder of the two brothers. Certainly by John Runciman is the excellent picture of "Belshazzar's Feast," hung in the Billiard-room, a work so delicate in its handling, so mellow in the golden and ruddy tones of its colouring, as to support the opinion held by some discerning critics, that this artist's brief life afforded definite promise of his becoming a far subtler and more refined painter than the better-known member of his family ever was.

### XIII.

In the Drawing-room hang many admirable and interesting works, to a few of which we may direct attention. Chief among them is the noble three-quarter-length of Anthony Triest, Bishop of Ghent, by Rubens, a portrait most characteristic in pose, vigorously lifelike in expression, and accomplished in colour. Another portrait of this prelate, a seated half-length turned to the right, was painted by Van Dyck, Rubens' great pupil, and etched by his own hand in a plate which was afterwards completed with the graver by Peter de Jode. In the same room is Van Dyck's rendering of "A Lady of the Coningsby Family," a graceful full-length, draped in rose-colour, the gloved right hand resting on a flower-pot which

*Rubens*

*Christie's Feb 96*

is relieved against a wooded background, and the right foot raised as the figure stands on a flight of stone garden-steps. A bust-sized male portrait of an unknown subject also bears the name of Rubens, and, by whatever hand, it is certainly an admirable example of Flemish art. The costume is black with a piped ruff ; the face worn, the brow furrowed, the hair yellowish, slightly silvered with age, the thick beard and moustache of a ruddy colour, and the flesh-tones most attractive in the quietude and cool grey quality of their shadows. By Zeeman, an esteemed Dutch painter of naval subjects, known, too, as an etcher of much directness and simplicity of method, is a large sea-piece, with shipping and a great expanse of sky in which the clouds are beginning to grow mellow towards the sunset ; and by Melchior Hondecoeter we have a vigorous picture of " Fighting Cocks," firmly painted, and effective in the contrast of the white plumage of the nearer bird to the glowing brown and ruddy tones of the rest of the picture.

The Library, a particularly sunny and spacious room on the upper floor, contains in addition to its books—which, as we have already said, include those bequeathed to the Baron by Boerhaave, his early friend,—a fine and extensive collection of prints, duly catalogued and arranged in volumes according to their various schools. Among the rest are some rare Dürer items, and a set of John Clerk's etchings in their progressive states, along with many original sketches by his hand.

Over the fireplace is inlet in the wainscoting an attractive subject representative of " Music," executed in *grisaille* on canvas, in clever simulation of a marble bas-relief. It is signed by its painter, Jacob de Wit, a native of Amsterdam, born 1695, died 1754, who "attained a marvellous excellence in the imitation of sculpture of all kinds of materials, bronze, wood, plaster, and particularly white marble, in which he produced such complete illusion that even the practised eye is deceived." His most notable

work of this kind was the decoration, in 1736, of a hall in the Hôtel de Ville of Amsterdam ; and it is further stated by Kugler that “a favourite subject with the master was the representation of pretty children in the taste of Fiammingo.” The present picture, in the satisfying arrangement of its composition and in the grace of its flowing lines, possesses a more legitimate artistic value than could come from any merely imitative dexterity in rendering the effect of sculpture by means of painting. The musicians are a party of naked, chubby children. The figure of their leader is an especially charming one, standing holding up a music-book in one hand, beating time with a roll of papers held as a baton in the other, and singing with open mouth ; his raised face, with the soft hair clustering about the rounded cheeks, wearing an entranced expression which embodies the very spirit of melody. Beside him one of his infant musicians touches the wires of a lyre, another bends over a great mandoline, of which a third is tightening the strings, and a fourth breathes softly on the flute.

At the entrance to the Library door are placed two large glass cases, one filled with natural history specimens, the other containing the valuable collection of Roman remains, in metal, pottery, coins, etc., accumulated by Baron Clerk, which it would require the skill of an archæologist rightly to estimate. Among them is a curious and most interesting ivory carving, inscribed, on a parchment label, in the Baron's handwriting, “An Antient piece of Sculpture on the Tooth of a Whale,—it was found by John Adair, Geographer, in the North of Scotland, Anno 1682, all the figures are remarkable.” In this year Adair, the Geographer for Scotland, was appointed by the Privy Council of Scotland to make a survey of the kingdom and maps of the shires, of which only a portion was published. The carving represents a crowned queen, seated holding a lapdog on her knees ; with a knight,

wearing a surcoat over chain-armour, and bearing a sword and a shield blazoned with a *chevron chequé*, standing on her left ; and on her right a musician playing on a crowde, an old instrument resembling a violin ; while between these, round the rest of the ivory, is a row of female figures, wearing long flowing robes, standing with clasped hands, that beside the musician holding a palm-branch. The carving is described and figured in Dr. Daniel Wilson's "Prehistoric Annals of Scotland." Dr. Wilson considers it to be a queen piece of a chess set, and assigns it to the fourteenth century.

#### XIV.

In the Charter-room are preserved, in addition to documents, many curious miscellaneous relics of an artistic and personal sort. The mss. include the account-books of the family, extending well into the seventeenth century, kept with the minutest accuracy, and containing many entries of great interest to the student of the social manners of the past. There are also voluminous devotional compositions, common-place-books, etc., by the first Baronet ; and the ms. "History of my Life," and the two volumes of the "Journal of my Travells for 5 years Through Holland, Germaine, Italy, France, and Flanders," by the second Baronet, Baron Clerk, along with the mss. of several of his published and unpublished historical and antiquarian pamphlets.

A somewhat grim development of portraiture is seen in a couple of waxen death-masks—one of them shows the face of Lady Margaret Stuart, the Baron's much-loved first wife—each casketed in its little wooden case or shrine. The habit of preserving such masks seems to have been common in Scotland during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,—we remember that the Abertarff sale included several representing various members of the Lovat family : a survival, one

may call it, of the old Roman custom of preserving the waxen images of ancestors, which prevailed, too, in France, in the days when Clouet was summoned to Rambouillet, to cast the waxen effigy of the dead Francis I.

In the Charter-room are various interesting old miniatures and drawings, among the latter one of a cupid and a griffin, attributed to Raphael; one by Guido; a couple of designs by Inigo Jones—one marked “given me by the Earl of Burlington in 1727” (the year of the Baron’s visit to London), “I very much value this and the other drawing by Inigo. John Clerk, 1744;” and the original sketch for the picture of St. Cecilia, still preserved at Penicuik, by Francesco Imperiali, an artist of repute in his day, who died at Rome in 1741, under whom the Baron studied art when in Italy, and who was afterwards one of the instructors of Allan Ramsay, the portrait-painter.

Another relic of the Baron’s days in Italy is the small marble bust of Cicero—preserved in the Charter-room—which, as he tells us in his “History,” was bequeathed to him by “Montignia Chapigni, a learned antiquarian and philosopher.” Yet another is a little wooden casket, fragrant still with a sweet old-world perfume, as we open the drawers filled with neatly stoppered bottles. This is the “Box of Chymical Medicines, still at Penicuik,” which was presented to the Baron on his leaving Florence, along with “all the variety of wines and sweet meats which his country produced,” by the Grand Duke Cosimo III., who had previously honoured the young Scotsman by bestowing on him “a patent under the privy seal signed by himself and his Secretary of State, the Marquise de Ricardi, appointing me a Gentleman of his Bedchamber, which patent lies now in the Charter-room.”

On one of the shelves is placed another curious family relic, a basket filled with artist’s materials, marked “Oil colours brought from Rome by Uncle Sandy,” a son of the first Baronet, that Alexander

Clerk who figures in the Baronage as "bred a painter," and whose name appears, in 1729, on the original indenture of the Edinburgh School of St. Luke, as a member of that first academy founded in Scotland for the study of art, in which, six years later, Strange the engraver received instruction. In this old document, so significant in the history of painting in our country, and now fittingly in the possession of the Royal Scottish Academy, Richard Cooper, Strange's master, appears as Secretary. Among the other signatures are those of James Clerk, Alexander's elder brother, afterwards third Baronet of Penicuik; his nephew Hugh Clerk, Junr., who "served with the allied army in Germany, and died soon after the battle of Minden"; the two Ramsays; "Ja. Norie" and "Jas. Norie, Junior"; John Patoun, whose portrait of Thomson the poet is now in the National Portrait Gallery, London; John Alexander, the portrait-painter, who engraved the family group of his grandfather, George Jamesone of Aberdeen; and William Denune, known by his portraits of Thomas and Mrs. Ruddiman, of Professor Robert Simson of Glasgow (1746), and of the Rev. William Harper, Episcopal clergyman in Leith (1745).

There is one other of the contents of the Charter-room to which we must refer, a volume containing a complete set of Turner's "*Liber Studiorum*" prints, evidently an original subscriber's copy; most of the plates are in excellent impressions, and some are proofs.

For permission to examine these, and all the other Art Treasures at Penicuik House—to many of which we have been unable even to refer—we have to express our grateful thanks to Sir George Clerk, the owner of the mansion, and to the Dowager Lady Clerk, its present occupant.

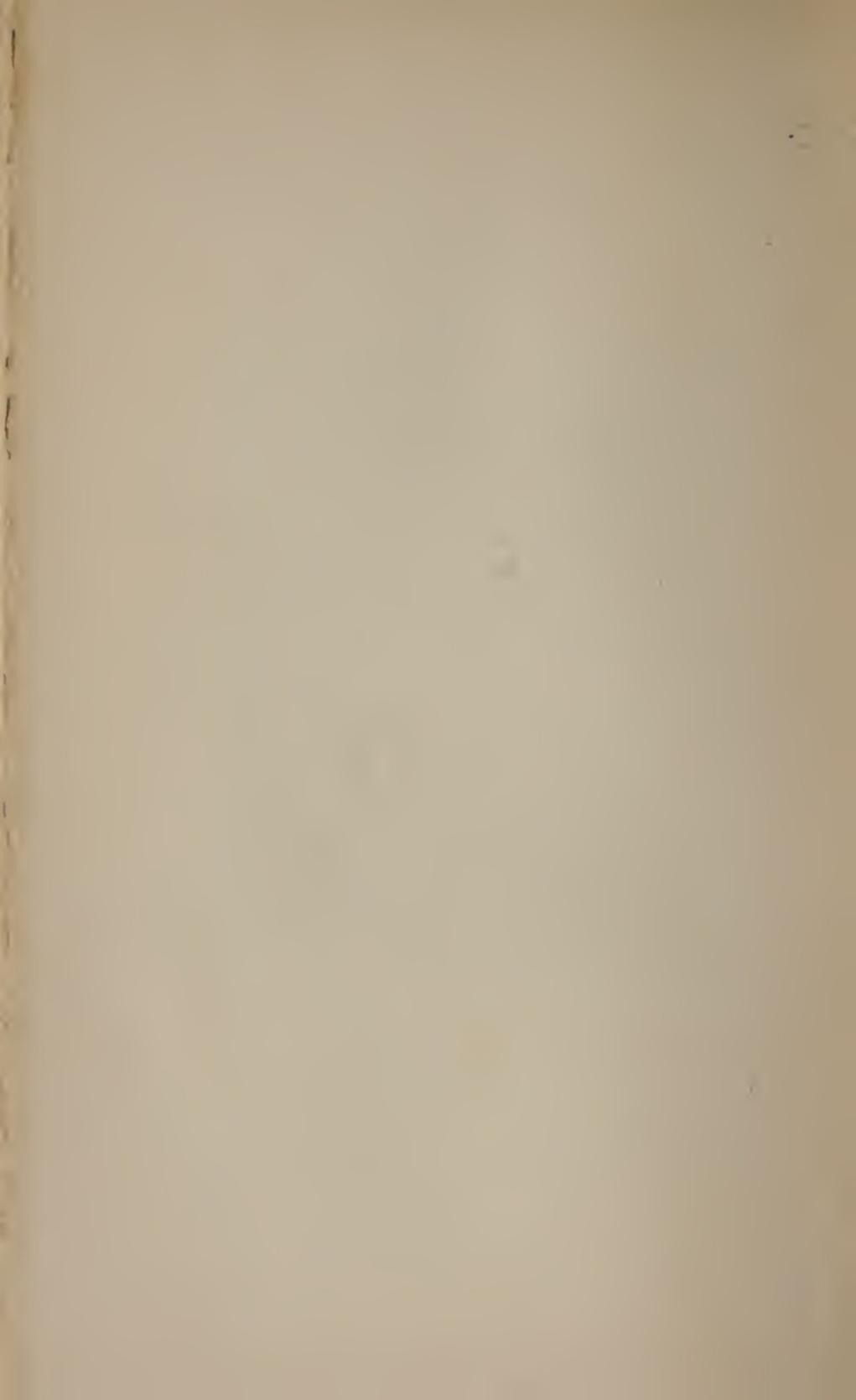
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(See page 30.)

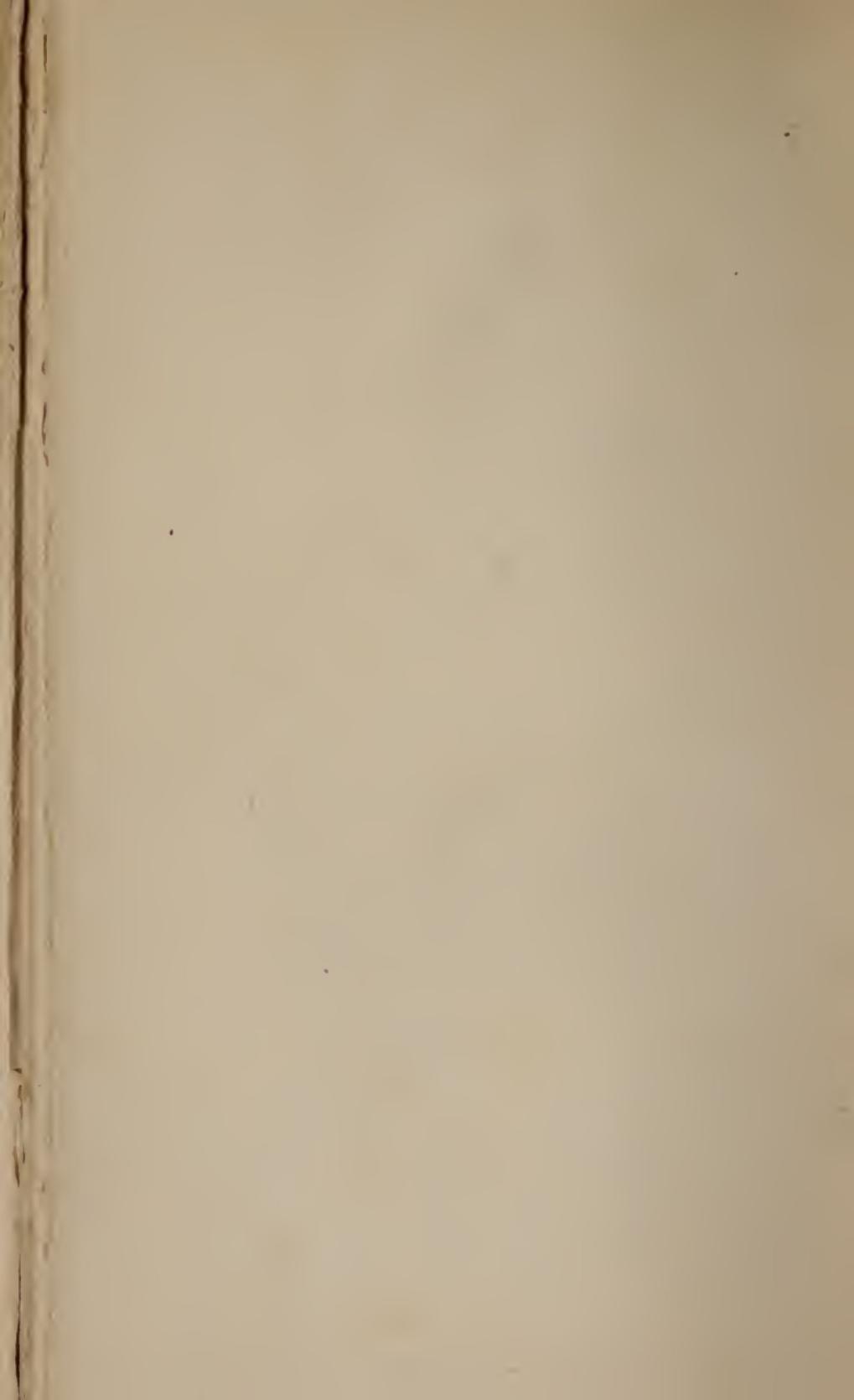
We have just had an opportunity of examining the portraits of Sir James Clerk, the third Baronet, and Elizabeth Cleghorn, his wife, in the possession of Miss Elliott Lockhart, at 17 Rutland Street, Edinburgh. In each the figure is seen to the waist, within a painted oval. The Baronet is clad in a yellowish pink gown, worn over a red vest, with the shirt unbuttoned at the throat. The face, turned slightly to the right, has clear-cut features, full blue eyes, and dark eyebrows, the hair being entirely concealed by a blue cap. The left hand is laid on the top of a folio volume, resting on a table to the right, which is covered with a brilliantly patterned cloth; and a green curtain appears behind to the left. In the portrait of Lady Clerk the face is seen in three-quarters to the left, and has pale yellow hair and eyebrows, and blue eyes. The costume is a white dress worn low at the throat, and a blue mantle. A tree-trunk appears behind the head, and a wooded landscape to the right. Each picture is signed with the name of a portrait-painter which we have not elsewhere met with—“*Gul: Mosman pingebat 1739.*” The handling of the works is hard and definite.

*Mosman*

THE END.







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Chew. Morris. p 42. 41.

8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Pembroke - page 54-55.

Wosmann's Landschaft p 69.

Racemosa group, long pitcher. 32.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
description. 35

Morris & Low Standard bottle 84 ~~1838~~  
~~or 1829~~

white cockade & Rosemary. p. 37.

So called Morris by Holstein - p 57.

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